

O.A.C. Becomes a Teeming City As 11,000 Women Attend Jubilee

BY JEAN BEBENSEE

GUELPH, June 18 — (Staff) — Eleven thousand Ontario farm women swarmed the Ontario Agricultural College grounds here today in the largest women's meeting this country has ever witnessed. They represented hundreds of Women's Institutes of the province celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario.

Three special trains, 198 chartered buses, and seemingly endless individual automobiles carried the great throng of celebrants to Guelph.

Rejoicing in their heritage and through their leaders pledging themselves to strengthen homes and communities — so fighting for the peace of the world — the assembled thousands accepted golden jubilee greetings from Prime Minister George Drew, Hon. T. L. Kennedy, minister of agriculture; from leaders in the W. I. movement in Ontario, the other provinces of Canada, England and Wales, and New Zealand; and from other Dominion and world-wide women's organizations.

Lieutenant-Governor The Hon. Ray Lawson and Mrs. Lawson received the rural homemakers during the tea hour. Messages of congratulation were forthcoming from Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, Prime Minister W. L. MacKenzie King, and from the Women's Institutes of South Africa.

Climax of the tremendous ceremonial celebration was a brilliantly-costumed pageant presented in the early evening on the great outdoor stage. Under the title "Let There Be Light" it chronicled the history of the Women's Institutes through 50 years, together with their confidence and vision for the future.

Weather favored the historic meeting. The city, the college welcomed the women. The sun beamed from a blue sky clouded only with picturesque puffiness, and the O.A.C. grounds in all their spring loveliness formed the setting ideal for a farm women's celebration.

Macdonald Institute, the brain child of Mrs. John Hoodless of Stoney Creek, the founder of the W. I., expertly handled the crowd in a picnic lunch, though it had prepared for a mere 6,000. Two hundred chosen institute guests were entertained at a dinner in the Administration Building cafeteria in the evening.

Speakers were unanimous in their praise of the contribution of the W.I. to peace and to the welfare of Ontario. They saw the organization and others of its kind paving the way to universal understanding and happiness. They called upon it to give leadership.

"At a time when this country is going to grow faster than ever before — and it is — the need for improved standards and the need for happiness in rural areas assumes national importance," said Col. Drew.

first leaders of the W.I., and made a plea for greater respect and understanding among the women who will continue the work in a "worthwhile future."

Mayor Gordon L. Rife, welcoming the women to Guelph, rated the W.I. as "the greatest women's organization in the world." He credited its success to its support of the democratic way of life.

W. R. Reek, new president of O.A.C., considered the influence of the W.I. "immeasurable." Its unselfishness and its ability to stand upon its own feet, made it an effective weapon for peace.

"The character of the women who make up the Women's Institute is such that the cause of religion can never be far from the Institute's program. I express the gratitude of all who are interested in church work for its influence on moral life," said Chancellor G. Gilmour of McMaster University, representing the Dominion Council of Churches. He spoke of the stand for moral correctness, loyalty to high principles, and the contribution to the banishment of fear in health programs.

Miss Anna P. Lewis, director of the Women's Institute Branch and Home Economics Service, saw the W. I. as a force for democratic citizenship. She pointed out that this year of celebration also marks the 5th year of service to women of the Department of Agriculture.

Mrs. Cameron Dow, past president of the F.W.I.C., asked the women to understand the forms of government and to be a "thorn in the flesh," to representatives in government in improve social conditions. She mentioned jail conditions in particular.

Mrs. A. E. Walker, past provincial and Dominion president, represented the Stoney Creek institute, mother of all others throughout the world. She recommended that each branch adopt one overseas institute as a friend.

Mrs. Laura Rose Stephen, first government lecturer appointed by the Department of Agriculture, now aged 81, reminisced humorously, asking for tolerance in outlook, and in acceptance of innovations. She suggested the women make their minds masters of their bodies.

Advertisements of farm life as a way of life in face of growing industrialism was advocated by Mrs. F. G. Miller of Hamilton. Provincial

"No country can raise itself much above the level of happiness we can establish in agricultural areas. The prosperity of the country is proportionate to the prosperity of its farm people," he said.

He commented that in few places in the world today could such a mass gathering be attempted with food and transportation rationing so rigidly controlled. "We are a very fortunate people," said the premier.

He commended the influence of the institutes in laying fine foundations for Canada, and in making rural life attractive.

"No organization means as much to the character and welfare of this province as the Women's Institute," Col. Kennedy stated. "Nothing we can say can repay you. We have a warm spot in our heart for the work you are doing. We can only say 'Thank you.'"

"This is a sight anyone sitting on this platform today will never forget." The sight, he said, surpassed the wildest dreams of 50 years ago, and portended the good to be done in the next 50 years, likewise beyond the scope of dreams.

Mrs. Hugh Summers, Fonthill, president of the F.W.I.O., presided over the gathering. She expressed pride in the "mighty stream of institutes," and in "an organization which so many women found worthy of support." She commended the contribution to the betterment of home and community life, and the influence on national and international life. She asked for humility in the face of the wisdom of the

past president of the Council of Women, Miss Mary A. Clarke, inspector of home economics of the Department of Education, and Mrs. Guy Skinner of Michigan, the former Bess McDermand, represented the earlier superintendents of the W. I. Mrs. G. Conant, Ontario Commissioner of the Girl Guides, brought greetings from that organization.

Lady Lonsley Taylor spoke on behalf of the National Federation of Women's Institutes of England and Wales, and Miss Amy Kane represented the W. I. of New Zealand. Mrs. W. G. Fenton of Michigan brought congratulations from a similar American organization.

Representatives from the provinces were as follows: Mrs. S. E. Cummmow, British Columbia; Mrs. E. E. Morton, Alberta; Mrs. Robert Palmer, Manitoba; Mrs. W. E. Smallman, Quebec; Mrs. Elton Smith, Nova Scotia; Mrs. Julian Herring, Prince Edward Island, Mrs. J. H. McCulloch, Brampton, secretary read messages from Saskatchewan and New Brunswick, and from the Associated Countrywomen of the World.

The pageant was under the direction of Brownlow Card of Toronto, with script by Patricia Card. Horace Lapp's orchestra provided the music.

Mrs. Dow displayed a silver cup won by the Isley-Zion Institute, Ontario, in the Dominion essay competition. Similar cups were won by New Brunswick and Nova Scotia for village histories and a handbag respectively. They are given by Lady Tweedsmuir.

Thirteen charter members of the Stoney Creek Institute were given an ovation.

At the dinner, chaired by Mrs. Summers, and arranged by Mrs. G. Gordon Maynard, secretary of the committee and a member of the board, toast to the F. W. I. O. and the F. W. I. C. was proposed by Mrs. Reek and answered by Mrs. E. A. Duke, past provincial president. Mrs. H. R. McCrie, a past board member, proposed the toast to the Department of Agriculture, responded to by Deputy Minister C. D. Graham.

Mrs. L. MacEwen, board member, toasted distinguished guests. The reply was made by Mrs. L. Millen, provincial president of

52,500 Slices Feed Multitude

Fifty-two thousand, five hundred one-slice sandwiches, by count, plus an unknown number of smaller fancy sandwiches, were prepared by Macdonald Institute yesterday to feed the 11,000.

Paper bags containing five sandwiches, wax-paper wrapped, were handed out along with ice cream cups and coffee to 10,500 Women's Institute members on the O.A.C. grounds at tea time. This number does not include parties of early eaters, and a few score who had tea with Lieut.-Gov. and Mrs. Ray Lawson (the fancy sandwiches.) Nor does it include the non-eaters, those who lacked the courage to queue. All were celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario.