

District W.I.'s donate quilts to Ronald McDonald House



PHOTO / CONTRIBUTED

W.I. members stands in the lobby of Ronald McDonald House in London with some of the 16 quilts donated. From the left are: Mary Nicklas, Stratford; Linda Hammond, Mt. Elgin; Mary Lou Ross, Tavistock; Laura Green, Embro; Sheila Greason, St. Marys; Margaret Bell, Tillsonburg; and Joyce Hill, Tavistock.

By Laura Green

Remember the British film "Calendar Girls" based on the true story of the women of Rylstone and District Women's Institute near Skipton, North Yorkshire. They produced a calendar featuring women in traditional W.I. activities but wearing nothing but pearls and a smile to raise funds for leukaemia research. This was under the auspices of the Women's Institute in April 1999 - the initial goal was to purchase a comfortable sofa for the visitors room at the hospital.

Well, Oxford District W.I. members only bared their toes to display the 16 log

cabin style quilts made for the children who stay at the Ronald McDonald House in London.

ROSE (Rural Ontario Sharing Education) program coordinator Joyce Hill jumped on the idea from the Canadian Quilters Association who wanted to make 1,000 quilts for the Ronald McDonald Houses across Canada as their Canada 150 project. Each 12-1/2" log cabin style slab required one piece of Canada 150 fabric incorporated in the construction.

The ROSE committee organized two workshops - one to learn to sew a quilt slab and the second

to learn to quilt. Between the workshops, other experienced quilters sewed the blocks together to make small and large size quilt tops for children. After the second workshop, volunteers bound the edges of quilts - then ready to donate.

On Thursday, October 5th committee members plus this reporter had an arranged tour of the 34 rooms at Ronald McDonald House in London. Tour guide was Brianna Evans, Communications Associate for the Ronald McDonald House Charities Southwestern Ontario. There are three RMH charities in this region -

London and Windsor and a Family Room in London.

The RMH provides "home-away-from-home environments for seriously ill or injured children and their families". Besides the evening meal provided and prepared by volunteer groups for 60 people, the house offers so much more for the families.

By the end of the tour, the group was very thankful for the Ronald McDonald House and thankful that our families haven't had to use the wonderful "home away from home."

The quilts made by the Oxford Women's Institute members will be well loved. *Tara Gazi P. G. Oct 11, 2017*