

WI push brings new lift to disabled

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Family Editor



Roberta Lane, Ingersoll MS Carnation Mother, sits in the new chairlift at Woodingford Lodge pool while Edith McCartney,

patient services co-ordinator for the MS Society, operates the handcrank at the back.

(Staff photo by Philip Walker)

When the Women's Institute pulls together to support a worthy cause, the results can be spectacular.

Last night, representatives from 17 branches of the North Oxford district gathered at Woodingford Lodge pool to cut the ribbon on an \$8,080 hydraulic lift, the Institute's contribution to the International Year of the Disabled.

The chairlift will allow any disabled and elderly residents of Oxford County who benefit from water therapy to be easily raised and lowered into the heated pool. Before it was purchased, swimmers in the regular multiple sclerosis society swim program had to rely on a manual "heave-ho" from volunteers.

The Women's Institute became involved in the project in early spring when two members, Alison Hart and Helen Hossack, approached their district president with the idea. Both knew a wheelchair-bound woman in Woodingford Lodge who would benefit from the therapeutic swim program if a lift was available.

MS CHAIRMAN INVITED

MS chairman Marjorie Munnoch was invited to the Institute's spring executive meeting to discuss the project, and by the annual meeting in June, the 17 branches had pledged \$5,900.

"Since we'd come that far, we said why not go all the way?" North Oxford president Irene Drenth said in an interview. "We left it until the end of June and all the money came in."

Much of the \$8,080 was raised at last year's International Plowing Match, Mrs. Drenth said. Although this is the first large-scale project the North Oxford Institute has attempted, individual branches are always busy in the community, she added. The Institute raised money toward the Embro community centre, some groups canvass for the blind, and others send donations to the Women's Emergency Centre and help the local Red Cross Society.

The more than 600 WI members involved in the lift project hail from the Braemar, Brooksdale, Browns, Drumbo, Princess Elizabeth, Embro West Zorra, Harrington, Hickson, Innerkip, Kintore, Lakeside, Anna P. Lewis, Grace Patterson, Plattsville, Tavistock, Uniondale and Woodstock North branches.

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Chairlift installed at therapeutic pool

WOODSTOCK (Bureau) — An hydraulic chairlift has been installed at the therapeutic swimming pool at Woodingford Lodge with the \$8,080 cost paid by the 17 branches of the North Oxford Women's Institute.

Women's Institute president Irene Drenth said Monday it is the first time the 17 branches have pooled their resources for a single project, which they chose to mark International Year of the Disabled.

The chairlift is used to raise and lower patients into the pool and is easily operated by a hand crank.



A POOL LIFT for Woodingford Lodge in Woodstock was purchased by the Oxford North Womens Institute. Present for the first official use of the device July 6 are Jane Jonsen (left) of Thamesford, a multiple sclerosis patient, Margaret Munnoch of Woodstock, multiple sclerosis chairman, and Irene Drenth of Embro, president of Oxford North District. (Contributed Photo)

Oxford W.I. Donates Pool Lift

Oxford North District Women's Institute, comprised of 17 local branches from the northern part of Oxford County, held its spring board meeting in April 1981 and had as a special speaker, Mrs. Margaret Munnoch of the Multiple Sclerosis Society.

From this meeting the idea was conceived that the Women's Institute branches from Oxford North would provide a pool lift to Woodingford Lodge in Woodstock for therapy and aid to handicapped persons of Oxford County.

Delegates at this meeting took the information back to the individual branches and pledges were made at the District Annual in late May 1981.

Since the pledges didn't fully cover the entire cost, representatives again approached their W.I.'s for further donations and this along with the aid of a donation from the executive of Oxford North fully realized the cost.

The executive of Oxford North District and representatives from the 17 branches: Braemar, Brooksdale,

Browns, Drumbo, Princess Elizabeth, Embro West Zorra, Harrington, Hickson, Innerkip, Kintore, Lakeside, Anna P. Lewis, Grace Patterson, Plattsville, Tavistock, Uniondale and Woodstock North were present for the dedication ceremony at Woodingford Lodge on July 6, 1981. Also present were Dr. Harry Parrott, former Minister of the Environment for Ontario, Mr. Ernie Wood, Chief Administrator for Woodingford Lodge and Mr. Jack Warden, Chairman of the Woodingford Board.