



WI ANNIVERSARY MEMENTOS — The WI has worked on a number of projects for its Centennial anniversary. Among these is the special history book — *For Home and Country* — written by Linda M. Ambrose, an assistant professor of history at Laurentian University. FWIO Public Relations Office Mary Janes (seated) of Lambton County and Warwick WI PRO Gladys Holbrook proudly display the history book, along with the commemorative plate, mug and T-shirt which have been produced for this special year.

(Photo by Jeffrey Carter)

'Celebrate the Past, Challenge the Future'

The members of the Federated Women's Institute of Ontario understand well the connection between past and future. To understand where one is headed, one requires an understanding of where one has been.

The first Women's Institute in the world held its inaugural meeting on Feb. 19, 1897 at Stoney Creek. Erland Lee was the meeting's chairman. Adelaide Hoodless was elected as the organization's first president. This was the start of the long and influential history of the organization which, its members agree, has had a positive impact on the province.

One of the first major projects carried out by the institute was to push for a solution to the problem of impure milk in Ontario. Today, 100 years later, the institute continues to bring its concerns and ideas to government and the larger Canadian society. For example, the institute is again concerned with the question of milk purity and has raised concern about the possible use of the growth hormone rBST in Canadian dairy herds

Today, there are 14,000 WI members in Ontario including 350 members who just joined the organization last year. The organization continues to work as

an advocate for "family, community and country" and has even entered cyberspace with its own web site (www.xcelco.on.ca/~edjanes), thanks to the work of Edward and Peter Janes, the sons of Public Relations Officer Mary Janes. A major celebration will take place at the Hamilton Convention Centre from June 17 to 22 with delegates arriving from around the world for a broad ranges of activities and speakers.

On Centennial Day, June 21, an internationally-renowned speaker Dr. Roberta Bondar will address the group. Bondar, a scientist at the University of Western Ontario, was Canada's first woman in space. She travelled in the space shuttle Discovery in 1992.

Also on Centennial day, a historical pageant written by Peggy Knapp, a former FWIO president, will be presented. Completing the program will be an international dinner, with delegates in national costumes, followed by a multicultural program.

Registration forms for the centennial celebration are available from the FWIO provincial office at Guelph. Call 519-836-3078 for further information about the program.