

## Tweedsmuir History - The 1960's

By 1964 Mrs. Walker reported that all levels of the organization had begun to take Tweedsmuir Books seriously, with well over 1,100 Branch histories recorded. She introduced Tweedsmuir Workshops to the volunteer curators across the province to teach the fundamentals of compiling local history books. To supplement these workshops, she released the first Tweedsmuir Manual in 1962. "The Women's Institutes," writes Dr. Linda Ambrose in *For Home and Country: The Centennial History of the Women's Institutes in Ontario*, "were the undisputed authorities in matters of local history, and in 1967 there was a real appetite for all the history they could serve up."

The Institutes' expertise in compiling local history was central to the centennial celebrations in most rural communities in 1967. Ethel Chapman, Editor of the Women's Institute publication *Home and Country* said: "They are having a wonderful time. And they are teaching the younger generations Canada's history in a painless and delightful way."

## Tweedsmuir History - 2010

In 2010, an agreement was made with the Ontario Genealogical Society (OGS) to digitize these Tweedsmuir Collections and make them available to the public through the OGS e-library. This is great news to the WI. Besides having the original documents remain locally, the whole world will be able to access the Tweedsmuir online to conduct family research, learn about our rich communities, and discover the wonderful work that has been created by WI members.

Today, Tweedsmuir Books are now officially "Tweedsmuir Community History Books" and the Curators are now called "Coordinators". Despite the name changes, Tweedsmuir books continue to be compiled by all levels of the Women's Institute's structure – Branch, District, Area and Province. While many are still in the homes of the Coordinators, others have been deposited in local archives, museums and other locations.

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