

The Women's Institute was a national organization founded in 1897 with aims attractive to Lindsay women. The W.I. sought to promote an appreciation of rural living, study issues which particularly affected women and children and work to improve local communities. It was also a social circle, a chance for women living on farms and small villages to get together. At one time or another, there were three branches of the Women's Institute in Lindsay township.

A W.I. branch was first organized at Dyers Bay in July 1914. The Echo reported an initial meeting was addressed by Dr. Margaret Patterson. The president was Mrs. William Tyndall, 1st vice-president Mrs. M. McVicar, 2nd vice-president Mrs. G. Graham, organist Miss E.



Miller Lake Women's Institute

Boyle and secretary-treasurer Mrs. Charles Mathieson. The group seems to have faded away, then revived during the 1920s and 1930s. In March 1939, the Dyers Bay-Brinkman's Corners W.I. held a pot luck supper at Angus and Esma Rouse's home. "The ladies of the institute had prepared a good supper and the proceeds, with admission only 10 cents and five cents, amounted to \$9.40," said a report of the meeting, which concluded with recitations, songs and stepdancing. For all of its socializing, the branch seems to have lapsed after changing its name to the Willing Workers in November 1942.

The Miller Lake branch of the Women's Institute was formed on November 9, 1939. Mrs. William Rydall was elected president for 1939-40 along with vice-president Mrs. Earl Stewart, secretary-treasurer Mrs. Elvina Noble and district director Mrs. Annie Rouse. The first meeting of the new branch was held December 14, 1939 at Mrs. Rydall's home. There were 15 women present. The Echo reported that the business section of the meeting was taken up with Christmas cake recipes and an exchange of cards. The new branch began working within a week, serving refreshments at the Miller Lake school to a meeting December 21 which featured speakers on the formation and operation of farm credit unions.

Taken from "Proud People"
The Lindsay Township History Book.