



Mae Oatman Cutting the 90th Anniversary Cake



Springford Community Hall 1999

1974 was the beginning of Springford Women's Institute sponsoring 4-H clubs. They have supported the local club in various ways over the years responding to their needs as 4-H has changed. Further community involvement included participation in the 175th anniversary of South Norwich Township, holding rummage sales, having a penny table at Springford Fair and since 1987 holding an annual craft show. Many short courses on homemaking skills were offered to members and ladies in the community.

By 1986, Springford Women's Institute decided that their old hall was not in satisfactory condition. It had been painted several times and a new roof put on over the years but needed new kitchen facilities which were too costly for the age of this building. Finally, in 1988, the old hall was closed. The old hall was dismantled by Jacob M. Shetler. All the wood, windows and doors were transported to a mennonite farm near Lucknow, Ontario. From all of this material, Jacob built a house for he, his wife, Anna and family.

The Township of Norwich gave a piece of land adjacent to the community park to Springford Women's Institute for building a new hall. The new facility was constructed by October, 1988, with funds from a Wintario grant, Norwich Township, Agricultural Society and a generous community. The Women's Institute furnished the kitchen and continue to maintain it to the present time. A fund-raising group and the Women's Institute combined their efforts to raise funds and the balance was paid off by 1991. The parking lot was paved soon after that. A Management Board was organized with three of its members coming from the Women's Institute.

George Wilcox, the founder of rural mail delivery in Canada, was honoured at a special event at the hall. His work is remembered with an historical plaque located in front of the hall.

The 90th anniversary celebration was held in 1993. Many other branches joined with us and various past presidents of Springford read our branch history. Special anniversary plates of the old hall were sold to mark the occasion. Three more years will mark 100 years of Women's Institute in Springford. And so we will have spent a century of learning and working together for our families, our community and our country.



Provincial Plaque to George Wilcox