

# Each branch a story of dedication

## Oak Hill WI

Oak Hill School was for many years the prime concern of Oak Hill Women's Institute organized in February, 1916. . . . The branch provided a piano and the first musical instruction at the school, served hot lunches, supplied books for a library, pictures and kept the first aid box filled. . . . For some 40 years women residents at the Home for the Aged — later Pleasant View Lodge — were provided with a dinner and gifts in December. . . . Pocket money was given children at the Mohawk Institute.

## Atherton

There were 19 founding members of Atherton WI, originally known as No. 3 Highway West Branch, organized in November, 1932. . . . The branch furnished a room at Norfolk General Hospital in Simcoe, and one of its members has served on the hospital board as representative of South Norfolk District. . . . That same member, Mrs. Cecil Proctor, assisted in the founding of the Norfolk Unit of the Canadian Cancer Society in 1952. . . . One member served in offices at the various WI levels, branch, district, area, provincial and was a voting delegate to the ACWW Conference in Ireland in 1965.

## St. Williams WI

The St. Williams' WI was organized in 1914 in the Town Hall. . . . the branch sponsored a lyceum course given by the Affiliated Lyceum Chautauque Bureau, the Institute assuming the financial responsibility for the course, even though the Institute lost money on it. . . . St. Williams' entertained the 133rd, Norfolk's own battalion, in the town hall before it went overseas. . . . The branch was responsible for starting a horticultural society. . . . Financial dona-

tions were made toward installing village street lights. . . . Contributed to the fund for the fire-escape for the town hall. . . . The branch also raised the necessary initial funds towards a public library to be met 50-50 by the government. The rate-payers, fearing a raise in taxes for upkeep defeated the project at the polls.

## Oakland WI

Two of the 27 charter members remain in Oakland WI which will celebrate its 60th anniversary in February, 1973. . . . Early members sponsored a travelling library and formed home and school associations at Oakland and East Oakland schools. . . . The branch paid a \$15 annual rental fee for a piano at the old Foresters Hall. . . . In 1920 it disbanded for lack of a president. . . . After a lapse of 12 years it was reorganized as the East Oakland WI and by 1939 changed to Oakland WI with 43 members.

After the Second World War members raised \$253 from a bazaar on the Brantford market square and furnished a bed unit and lounge chair at Sunnybrook Hospital, Toronto. . . . A highlight each year is the annual Christmas meeting and turkey dinner with district officers, another branch and Grades 1 and 2 children from Oakland School as guests. . . . The children provided entertainment.

## Burth WI

Burth Women's Institute was organized in 1911, disbanded three years later and reorganized in 1914. . . . The branch helped buy a piano for Burth Baptist Church Sunday School where meetings were sometimes held. . . . In 1964 an antique display and tea was featured at Burth Community Centre and in 1967 a flowering crab apple tree was planted on the church lawn as a centennial project.

## Catcart WI

Organized in 1903, Catcart Women's Institute did not meet regularly until 1914 when membership increased to 37. . . . After the First World War a plaque was placed in Catcart Public School in honor of men of the community who fought. . . . Another plaque and an honor roll was placed in Catcart United Church following the Second World War. . . . In the late 1920s the WI signed a 20-year lease on a hall which was bought from the Canadian Order of Foresters when the lease expired. . . . The two plaques now hang in the WI hall which also serves as a Community Hall.

## Mount Pleasant WI

Twenty women were enrolled when Mount Pleasant WI was organized in February, 1903. . . . Members knit mittens for the village volunteer firemen. . . . Material and financial help have been given to prepare a village history. . . . On one occasion a representative of the Mayor of Mount Pleasant, Mich., visited the branch. . . . In June, 1962, members participated in unveiling a plaque to commemorate Dr. Augusta Stowe Gullen, the first woman to graduate in medicine in Canada. She was born in Mount Pleasant in 1857.

The branch has also been involved in unveiling a plaque for the Honorable Arthur Sturgis Hardy, a native of the village and Pioneer of Ontario and a plaque on the new Bell Telephone Building in the village. . . . The first word spoken over a wire connected with the Bell Homestead was from a house in Mount Pleasant now occupied by the Sinclair family.

## Princeton-Woodbury WI

A cemetery improvement project started in 1921 by the Princeton - Woodbury Women's Institute was completed in 1930 with the construction of an arch, gates, posts and fence. . . . The improvements were noted in a formal presentation to the Princeton Cemetery Board during the Old Boys' Reunion celebration in August, 1930. . . .

The branch was organized in April, 1913, with a membership of 37 the first year and attendance at some meetings reaching 80. . . . A clock was presented to the Princeton Memorial Library when it was erected in 1922 and a book is donated each year. . . . A memorial plaque for Thomas Horner was sponsored by the WI and erected by the historic sites committee. . . . In 1967, \$300 was contributed for kitchen supplies at the new Centennial hall, in 1968 stained glass window was given to the Princeton Cemetery mausoleum and in 1970 the branch was host for the district annual convention.

## Burford WI

Burford Women's Institute has celebrated its 70th anniversary. The organizational meeting was in January, 1899 under the direction of Mrs. Laura Rose Stephen. . . . Mrs. J. E. Brethour was the first president. . . . Community projects have included building memorial gates at Burford Pioneer Cemetery, starting a lending library in 1946 and contributing to the village trustees to buy litter containers to "help keep Burford beautiful."

## Vittoria WI

Through the efforts of the late Mrs. Helen Fee, the Vittoria WI was organized in November of 1939. . . . there were 22 charter members. . . . Along with the local home and school association, the branch sponsored a centennial program based on the work of Egerton Ryerson, a Vittoria native, who was instrumental in the establishment of the educational system in Ontario. . . . A welcome home party was given for veterans at the end of World War II.

## Lynedoch WI

The Lynedoch WI was organized in June of 1914. . . . the first exhibit was made at the county fair in 1928. . . . In 1939 there was a display at the Canadian National Exhibit. . . . The most venturesome project of the branch was raising money to buy the Anglican Church which had been closed. . . . An auction sale was a success, and enough money was raised to pay all expenses. . . . The centennial project was a cairn for the school bell. . . . It was unveiled by Miss Hagerman, a teacher at the school for 40 years. . . . Many came in costumes to centennial night, January 25, 1967.

## Riverside North Brant

In addition to the usual WI activities of providing 4-H Homemaking Club leaders and entering exhibits at Caledonia Fall Fair, Riverside North Brant WI features an annual meeting with their husbands as guests. The branch was formed in September, 1946.

## Grandview and Terrace Hill

The Grandview and Terrace Hill branch was organized in May of 1913 with 18 charter members. . . . During the world wars members helped to issue ration books, and served as hostesses at Maple Leaf Club for enlisted men. . . . During peace, the branch provided equipment for home nursing carried on by the school nurse. . . . Kitchen equipment, dishes, silverware, sand boxes and swings were donated to Grandview School. . . . The branch is responsible for the organizing of Grandview Home and School Association, and a member of the branch was the association's first president. . . . Annual awards are presented to students in the district. . . . G and TH made centennial quilt tickets and sold them. . . . The proceeds were used for two bursaries for girls studying home economics. . . . The branch has purchased a life membership in the Brant Historical Society.

## Lynn Valley

There were 20 charter members (one is still active) when Lynn Valley WI was organized in 1925 to contribute to the community's needs. . . . Correspondence and a gift exchange has been maintained for many years with a branch in Guildford, Surrey, England. . . . The branch, in conjunction with a neighboring WI, was instrumental in having a plaque erected on the property of the original school-house where it met and held other activities.

## Pleasant Ridge


Sponsoring school fairs, oyster suppers and Christmas dinners for the children were among early activities of Pleasant Ridge WI. . . . The branch was organized in April, 1921.

## Ohsweken WI

Ohsweken Women's Institute was organized in June, 1905, the first on the Six Nations Indian Reserve. . . . In 1916 it was disbanded so that the women could concentrate on Red Cross work for the duration of the First World War. . . . Since its reorganization in February, 1921, the branch has been instrumental in getting diphtheria inoculations for school children, school janitors appointed, introduced the teaching of music in the schools and bought a piano and kitchen utensils for the community hall. . . .

The Branch financed the first cement sidewalks in the village, donated \$100 toward a war memorial and provided sports equipment for young people and Junior Institute members. . . . Under the Regional Library System, WI members got a library for Ohsweken complete with a children's story hour, films, film strips and concerts. . . . Annual gifts are given Grade 8 students with highest average and who have shown greatest improvement.

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