

# Each branch, a history of caring

## St. George WI

The St. George WI was organized in January of 1903. The first officers of the branch became the district officers, as St. George was the first institute in North Brant. St. George and Blue Lake and Auburn Branch bought a lot at the corner of Main Street and Highway 5, and had a monument erected to the memory of the men who gave their life in the First World War. The institute remodelled a building that had been presented to the community by Mrs. S. G. Kitchen, and turned it into a community hall. Institute meetings are still held in this hall. Delegates to the Associated Country Women of the World conference in 1953, were entertained by St. George Branch. \$1,000 was donated for the new community arena and \$500 for repairs to the community hall.

## Scotland WI

Painting the band stand and furnishing Scotland with a bell were early projects of Scotland Women's Institute. The bell was rung at six-hour intervals. The branch's earliest records date from January, 1910. One member recalls the first meeting in 1902. In 1926

members packed barrels for the needy of Northern Ontario. Through the years the Public School has been provided with a flag, dishes and a couch, quilts were given to war brides coming to the community and a hedge was planted at Scotland cemetery. An annual donation is given to the library.

## Alford and Park Road WI

Forty-two women met in a log house in June, 1914, to organize Alford and Park Road WI and elect Mrs. James Gillen president. During the First World War members were actively engaged in war work and in 1916 they embroidered colors for the 114th Regiment. For 40 years the branch donated first aid kits to three schools in the area. Efforts are now directed to Pine Grove School which is now a community centre. A rug displayed in the Alexander Graham Bell museum at Baddeck, N.S., was hooked by members for a Tweedsmuir competition. A private ward in the Brantford General Hospital and a room in the nurses residence have been furnished. A charter member Miss Edith Kitchen was made honorary president in 1949 and still holds that office. To mark her 100th birthday in December, 1971, the branch gave a party at the John Noble Home.

## Atherton WI

The 19 founding members of the Atherton WI all resided on Highway 3 in 1932, which explains the branch's original name of '3 Highway West Branch'. Atherton has raised money to furnish a room at the local hospital, and one member has served on the hospital board as representative of South Norfolk District. Mrs. Cecil Proctor, an Atherton member, assisted in the founding of the Norfolk unit of the Canadian Cancer Society in 1952. Mrs. Bagdon was a voting delegate to the ACWW conference in Ireland in 1965.

## Simcoe Womens' Institute

Simcoe Women's Institute organized in 1903, was the first branch in Norfolk following the district organization a year earlier. For several years the branch had the same officers as North Norfolk District. Large classes in household science were conducted by department of agriculture lecturers in 1906 and by 1915, 133 members enrolled in a domestic science class of several days duration. There were also two-week classes in home nursing and sewing classes lasting several days.

During the Second World War Mrs. T. B. Barrett of Port Dover originated the Jam for Britain project which became nation wide. The branch furnished a three-bed ward at Norfolk General Hospital and a chest clinic was financed by institutes of Norfolk for 25 years. Branch members conducted sewing classes for three years at the YWCA clubroom in Simcoe.

## Lakeshore WI

The Lakeshore branch of the WI was organized in May of 1933. There were 25 charter members. Donations have been made to the Port Dover Library, Norfolk General Hospital expansion fund, Port Dover ambulance fund, the Children's Aid Society, European flood relief, and other groups. In 1959, Lakeshore was hostess to the district annual. Dogwood trees were planted on school grounds, and a maple tree at each school. A flagpole was also erected. In 1961 a member was appointed to the newly-formed auxiliary of the Norview County Home for senior citizens and a resident was adopted at this time. Lakeshore joined Marburg and Renton in a foster parent plan project and have adopted a boy in Hong Kong. A member won third prize in an FWIO poetry contest.

## Langton WI

The first charter meeting of the Langton WI was held in February of 1934, at the home of Mrs. Nicholson. In 1938 a motion was made to remember shut-ins at Christmas with fruit and flowers, which is still done. In 1959 a member sent a quilt block made in 1869 to the FWIO. The 1969 centennial quilt was framed and placed in Norview. Crab apple trees were planted in front of the community centre. Dresses were made for the centennial celebration.

## Tranquillity WI

Tranquillity WI, now Tranquillity-Fairview, was organized in April, 1950, with 45 charter members. Catering has been the main means of raising funds with a Scottish Rite banquet being the first such event. Early programs often featured musical selections and James Hibbard, the now well-known Brantford pianist, was a frequent guest.

## Port Dover

There were 44 charter members when Port Dover WI was organized in January, 1918. A flag and a picture of the King and Queen was purchased for every classroom of the public and high school and "Memorial Row" was established for Port Dover men lost in the First World War. The branch started the public library and members served as librarian, made donations to numerous community projects and sports teams and provided a baby incubator and five bed lamps to Norfolk County Hospital.

Members catered a welcome home banquet for men returning from the First World War with 600 attending. A memorial drinking fountain for men serving in the Second World War was placed in Lion's Park. The branch erected gates to Powell Park, provided chairs for the new auditorium at the school, provided the town with an ambulance, equipped a children's section in the Centennial Library, mounted the school bell on a cairn, gave \$500 for blazers for the school band, provided a P.A. system and sportstime for the arena. Over some 18 years nearly \$10,000 was spent on these projects.

## Bealton WI

In January of 1914 a group of women met in the Sunday school room of the Methodist Church at Bealton to organize the Bealton WI. Twenty three members joined. Each year since 1944 there has been public speaking at an annual family night in February. A trophy and awards are given. A plaque is kept in a glass case in the school at Boston, and each year's winners are recorded.

## Port Ryerse

Fourteen women attended the organizational meeting of Port Ryerse WI in March, 1955. Since that time the Branch has won several first prizes on exhibits at Norfolk Fair. Sponsoring a boy in travel has been one of their many projects.

## Norfolk south district

The provincial report for 1915-16 showed Norfolk South District Women's Institute had 145 members in seven branches. It was not until 1931-32 it was allowed its own standing committee conveners and had its first federated representative, separate from Norfolk North. In the intervening years all branches in the county worked toward building Norfolk General Hospital and furnishing rooms. This help, both financial and in service, continued through the years. In 1959 a nursing bursary was set up. The TB surveys in the county are the result of branch work in Norfolk South in conjunction with the County Health Unit.

## Whiteman's Creek

Mrs. Alfred Apps was the first president of Whiteman's Creek WI organized in August, 1911. Through the years members have contributed money and service to the community and participated in government-sponsored short courses, among other activities.

## Langford WI

Langford WI, organized in March, 1911, is one of the branches that can still boast a charter member, Miss Alma Vanderlip. It was the first branch in Ontario to have its Tweedsmuir History microfilmed by the Dominion Archives in Toronto.

## Villa Nova Women's Institute

Membership in Villa Nova Women's Institute has ranged from 14 in 1934 to its present 40. The branch was organized in February 1915. Quilting has been a project of its members who designed and made a Maple Leaf quilt for the Lady Tweedsmuir quilt contest in 1953. It won first prizes at the district and area levels and second prize at the provincial level. McCalls Publishing Company paid the branch \$100 for the design and included it in their needlework magazine. When the rural school was closed, the branch bought it for a meeting place and money is raised by renting it for community meetings and projects.

## Union Women's Institute

Five charter members are still active in Union Women's Institute which was organized in April, 1941. Twenty women were enrolled at that meeting.

## Sour Springs

Plays and concerts were money-raising events in the early days of Sour Springs WI organized in November, 1920 on the Six Nations Indian Reserve. Through the years the branch has helped the sick, disabled and burned-out families of the area.

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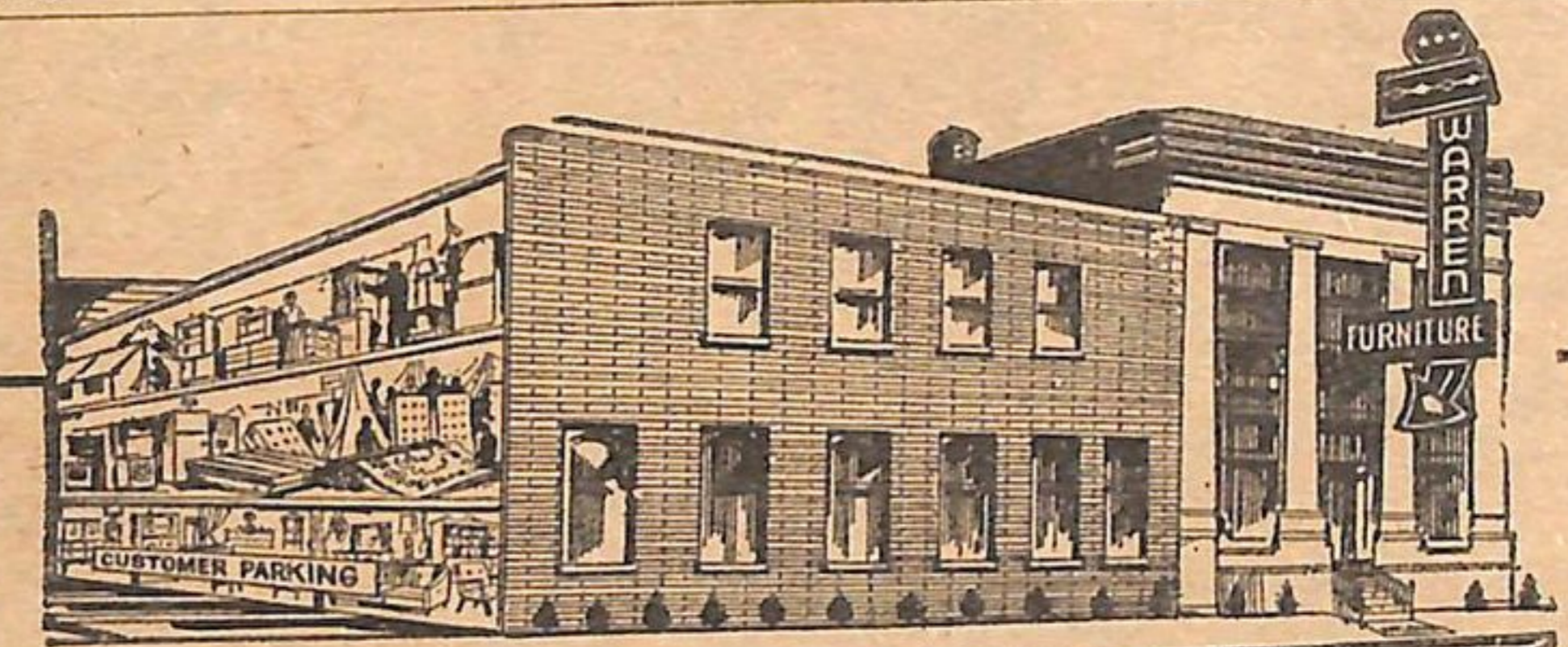
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