



The Erland Lee (Museum) home of the co-founder of the first Women's Institute in the world.

Institute Hall has own history

When the plans for the Ontario Agricultural Museum at Milton materialized, a small white building was moved to the grounds and allocated to the Federated Women's Institute of Ontario. Here they were to tell the story of the birth and growth of the organization and the part it has played to help women, especially in the rural areas.

The building came from the Community of Sheridan where it had been erected in 1838. Through the years it has been a church, school,

community and temperance hall, ice hut, residence and finally a workshop.

Today it bears the name of the Women's Institute Hall and inside, with murals on the walls and displays, it depicts the life and work of the W.I. through the years. From time to time there are demonstrators there to show the crafts of today.

In 1980, 54 Women's Institutes visited the hall, some having their meetings and using the kitchen facilities for a social time. On June 1, 1980 at the first unveling

of the Ontario Hall of Fame Association, the likeness of Dr. Ethel Chapman, former editor of Home and Country was unveiled. This year the sketch of Adelaide Hunter Hoodless was added to the Hall of Fame, so there is a special showcase display about her in the W.I. Hall. The name of Erland Lee has been submitted by F.W.I.O. to the committee for next year. We in Halton County are fortunate to be so handy to our W.I. Hall—do pay a visit there before the museum closes for the season at Thanksgiving.

Halton District Women's Institutes

The Halton District Women's Institutes are to be congratulated for the many valuable contributions they have made to individuals, families, and the community over the past 80 years.

One very important role is their interest and support of the 4-H Home-making Club Program. The W.I. sponsor clubs by locating volunteer leaders, by providing monetary assistance, by providing a meeting place for the clubs, etc. Of the eleven clubs currently participating in Halton, nine are sponsored by local Women's Institute Branches. This involves about one hundred members. However, over the years many young people have benefitted. They have had the opportunity to

learn new skills and knowledge, and to develop personally to help them become responsible members of society.

The W.I. also provides an annual Scholarship and Bursary to 4-H members who are furthering their education beyond high school. This year the Dr. Ethel Chapman Scholarship will be presented to Barbara Treviranus of R.R. No. 2, Georgetown and The Halton Women's Institute Bursary to Norma Wilson of R.R. No. 1, Norval.

In addition to 4-H, the Women's Institutes have also been active in the adult leadership and educational programs offered by the Home Economics Branch. Volunteer leaders attend workshops on a wide

variety of topics related to Home Economics and then return to teach this information to their own members and interested individuals.

The Home Economics Branch is grateful to the Halton Women's Institute for their continued interest, concern, and dedication in helping young people and adults acquire knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for a satisfying home and community life.

Congratulations Halton W.I. on your 80th Anniversary!

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Into the 80's

Where are we going as a Women's Institute organization?

It becomes difficult to assess and evaluate the achievements of the Women's Institute or any volunteer group, if dollars are the prime requisite. And yet, there is no doubt that the concern for money needed to run the volunteer organization gains a higher priority with each year of operation. We now must look at ourselves in a dual role, a volunteer group as well as a business organization. Always aware, that money is a "means" not an "end".

The Women's Institute relies heavily on the volunteer members to provide directives, especially through programming, through projects and because of resolutions, to voice an opinion to government and industry.

Also, because of our unique position, we receive strong support from the Home Economics Branch, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food. Under the direction of the local Home Economists, leadership skills are taught to the W.I.'s and community leaders who in turn teach women and girls in their areas. This type of working together expands the thinking of a

volunteer, providing a vehicle for learning through the wide variety of available courses.

The hand and glove situation will become more significant as we enter the next decade. It is becoming even more apparent that the volunteer must hold on with a bull-dog tenacity to keep this segment of society strong. As a volunteer organization we need the Home Economics Branch assisting the volunteers to discover more effective ways of handling new ideas, providing the participants with a positive self image, reinforcing the effectiveness of volunteerism and its worth.

Tweedsmuir Histories

These histories have been a project of the Women's Institute for over thirty years and they contain historical material relating to the individual community, collected and recorded by local people. The idea was first suggested by Miss Elizabeth Applebe of Stewarttown in 1933 when she was provincial convener for Historical Research and Current Events. Then Lady Tweedsmuir, wife of Canada's Governor General, and herself a devoted Institute member when in England, reinforced this concept in 1936 at a W.I. meeting in eastern Ontario, when she stressed the need for preserving the history of our developing land.

Many Branches took the idea seriously and started scrapbooks of clippings. Soon the provincial board of F.W.I.O. was promoting the idea compiling the books, suggesting types of material and items to be covered as well as order of contents. And so the Tweedsmuir Histories of local communities were launched.

It was soon evident that curators should be selected to take care of the contents of these books organized to include W.I. branch history, community history, farm histories and records of churches, schools, libraries, industries and the like, as well as treasured pictures of the community provided by the people. Consequently these curators became key people in promoting good ideas for accomplishing the task and since 1957, workshops have been held for curators to share information on researching and compiling historical records.

The value of these books as an authentic source of material for students of pioneer history has been recognized by the Ontario Ministry of Education and people may arrange to look at them in the home of the curator. There are over a dozen of them in Halton in various communities and a number of them have been micro-filmed by the Provincial archives further safeguarding their contents and underlining their value as historical material. Indeed several Halton W.I. Branches are producing their second or third volume at present, proof that history continues to be made.

A more recent idea for the individual to record historical data is the House Log or the House and Farm Log. These are being encouraged and anyone may compile one. The log tells the story of the house or farm from the beginning, who built it, of what materials and whether these were locally obtained, when it was built, its occupants through the years and any alterations made and when. With the addition of

drawings and pictures these can become quite valuable to the family who has researched them. Originally it was intended that this record should be left with the property if it changed hands, and the new owner would keep it up to date. All things considered, it would seem that a copy only of pertinent information from the log could be left when property is vacated, because many buyers now never take up residence but rent the house to several families instead, or we have also seen a fine old house demolished to make way for a new one. If you value your record, keep it for yourself.

Halton District Women's Institute gives two Bursaries and one Scholarship annually.

In 1980 it was decided to give a Bursary to a deserving Girl or Boy in Halton County. The following year it was decided to give a second Bursary and these two awards have been given annually ever since. The bursary winners have to be young people who have done well

academically (Grade XII or XIII with at least a 60 per cent average) and have participated and given leadership in school, in the community, in their church or 4H. Personal interests such as music, art, drama, sports or hobbies are also considered. Character references, from their school principal or respected citizen of their community, are also required. Finally the applicants must write an essay on "Why I feel I should receive the Halton District Women's Institute Bursary."

The Scholarship given by Halton District Women's Institute is named "The Dr. Ethel Chapman Scholarship". Dr. Chapman was born on a farm in the Campbellville area and took a very active role in rural life in Ontario. She gave the first lecture—demonstration, courses in foods and cooking. She worked on the "Farmers Magazine" for 10 years and then returned to Institute and 4H work. She had the unique ability to change with the times and young people found her delightful.

She served as Editor of the Home and Country—the Women's Institute Magazine from 1952-67.

The first Scholarship was awarded at Halton District 70th Anniversary in 1971. The recipient must be a girl from Halton County who has participated in the 4H Homemaking Clubs.

Dr. Chapman presented the first winner of the Scholarship, given in her name, to Miss Cathy Lashby at District Day in the fall of 1971.

Did you know?

... That there is an officers training at Waterloo University each May for 2½ days when a delegate from each branch may attend?

... That membership in the Women's Institute is open to all women?

... That the Women's Institute has representation on the United Nations, UNESCO, UNICEF and many other projects to help others?



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