

Arts council member groups

Crafts group started with spinning yarn

By LORI TAYLOR Herald Staff Writer

One of Georgetown's longest-running crafts groups got its start during the Second World War when women gathered to learn how to make

their own yarn because of a shortage of wool.

Today, almost 40 years later, the Arts and Crafts Co-operative of Georgetown is involved in crafts as varied as

silversmithing, decoupage, lapidary, weaving macrame, porcelain, bubble glass, china painting, tatting, candles, leather, preserved flowers and silk-screening. The group keeps its mem-

bership at 50 women because they prefer to meet in private homes. Membership costs \$5 a year, and members must be actively involved in a craft, or studying to improve a craft.

The work must be a craft as well, and not a hobby kit, group member Pat Beer said.

The co-operative meets every second month during the afternoon and hears speakers from the arts and those who talk on subjects of general interest. About three courses are offered per year among the members and the group pays the cost of the instructor. Members pay for their own supplies.

ANNUAL SALE The co-operative also provides its members with an opportunity to sell some of their work at an annual exhibition sale. Saturday at the North Halton Gold and Country Club, the group members who also have a craft will be displaying their work. The co-operative charges a five per cent commission on the sale of any work, to help finance its projects and courses.

The group was founded in 1942 by a group of five women. There was a shortage of wool during the war years, and these women wanted to help others learn how to make their own yarn for knitting clothing, not only for their own families, but for the soldiers overseas, Mrs. Beer said.

"It was a great time to own rabbits for angora. Every-

in a profit of \$5. Over the next few years, the group was invited to display its work at the Canadian National Exhibition, the Royal Winter Fair, the Ontario Crafts Centre, the Toronto Art Gallery and The Ontario Art Gallery. FALL FAIR

In 1944, the co-operative had its first display at the Georgetown Fall Fair. Today the group donates a sum of prize money and a number of its members act as judges in some of the crafts competitions.

The club's membership has risen steadily since 1945, Mrs. Beer said, and this fact is reflected in the records of the group's meetings, which include the dues paid that year. As the membership fees are so low, the group must charge a commission on its annual sale to pay for the instructors which it provides to members on courses of various topics and crafts.

The membership covers many crafts, and Mrs. Beer said the group tries to not have too many people practicing one particular craft, so that the members have an opportunity to study many different areas of interest.

While crafts groups were relatively scarce when the Arts and Crafts co-operative

bus." Interest in the group remains high, particularly when

it comes to the annual show. Attendance averages about 1,000 people, and has reached

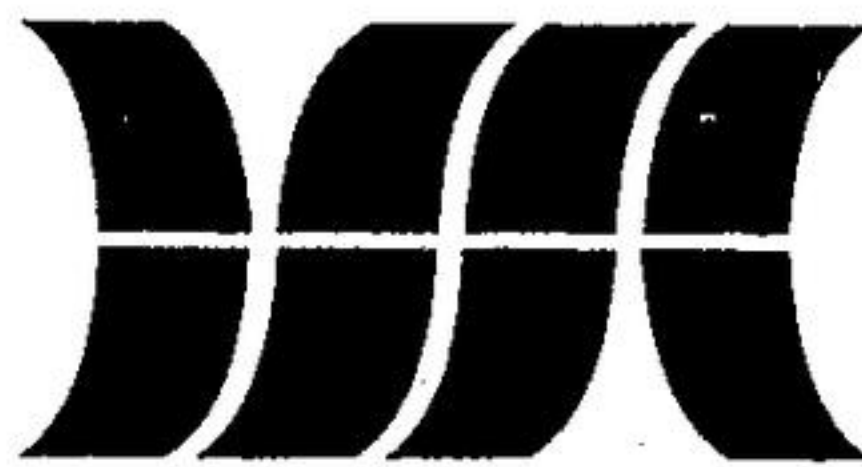
as high as 2,500 people. Saturday's sale is from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.



The annual exhibition and sale by the Arts and Crafts co-operative of Georgetown is this Saturday at the North Halton Golf and Country Club from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Samples of a great variety of handicrafts will be on display and for sale. Door prizes will be awarded. (Herald photo)



Thea Williams, a member of the Arts and Crafts Co-operative of Georgetown, dyes her own yarns, and is shown here hanging them out in the sun to dry. The co-operative got its start during the Second World War, when wool was in short supply and a group of women got together to teach other women how to manufacture their own yarn.



thing that could be carded and made into wool, was, including dogs' fur."

HANDICRAFTS The aim of the group was to revive Canadian handicrafts. The group's activities gained a lot of attention in the Toronto media because there were very few crafts groups in Ontario at the time, Mrs. Beer said. Crafts did not enjoy a real surge in popularity until about 15 years ago.

The first sale in Georgetown drew 150 visitors to what is now the home of Doug Sargent on Charles Street, and brought

began, crafts caught on with a vengeance about 15 years ago, Mrs. Beer said.

UNIQUE "There were so few in Ontario at the time. That's probably one of the reasons why the group received so many invitations to display its work, because it was unique."

"We were only an arts and crafts group," she added. "We had to be pretty independent to survive. The members covered their own expenses for the most part. During the war, when gas rationing was in effect, members who wanted to attend the meetings took the

Nine years of community involvement

UWC history marked by accomplishments, fun

The University Women's Club was nine years old September 7, and for a relatively young organization, the group has accomplished a great deal in the community. The club, which is a member of the Canadian Federation of University Women, has a set of goals which include maintaining high standards of education, to sustain interest and to be active in all aspects of public affairs, to foster a sense of responsibility and community involvement, and to participate in the work of the International Federation of University Women in order to bring about

understanding and co-operation among women university graduates. Since the club was established, its members have embarked on a number of community projects and projects in the education field.

SURVEY During the first year, the club was involved mainly in helping to administer the Georgetown Day Care Centre Survey. The study was presented to council, and the information it contained helped to establish the need for the regional day care centre now located on Maple Avenue.

The first of the club's popular annual book sales was held in 1972, with the profits going into an awards fund for community projects. Profits from the sale have been increasing yearly, and so have the awards. Awards have been given to high school students, to mature women returning to university, and to send a disadvantaged child to nursery school.

The University Women's Club has been sending two representatives to most meetings of Halton Hills council since 1974 to monitor the community's political life

and to learn of areas where the club could provide assistance.

CAREERS DAY The club celebrated International Women's Year with a display of books about and by women at the Georgetown Library, and with the staging of a Careers Day at Georgetown District High School. The Careers Day has since become an annual affair, with as many as 60 different professions represented.

Two children's concerts, one with the Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra in 1976, and a second with the Mississauga Symphony in 1977, were well

received. The concerts were part of the club's attempt to make more cultural events available in town.

Hiring practises and promotions for female professional staff have been subjects of interest to the University Women's Club. In 1976, the club studied these practises at the Halton board of education, and sent a letter to the board urging that opportunities for training and advancement for men and women be equal.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

A brief by the University Women's Club on the necessity for regular, quality physical education for elementary school children presented to the board of education in 1978 resulted in the board requesting its teachers to put every effort into improving the program in accordance with suggestions outlined in the board's core curriculum.

Among the national issues on which the club has focused its attention is the family court system in Canada.

The club submitted a resolution to the Canadian Federation, which was subsequently passed, urging "the provincial Attorneys-General and the Federal Minister of Justice to enact co-operatively the legislation necessary to create a nationwide, unified family court system presided over by Judges clothed with all the necessary authority to deal with all aspects of matrimonial law."

ENDORSED When this resolution was endorsed by the Canadian Federation, it meant the

proposal had the support of over 12,000 women in 116 clubs across Canada.

Earlier this year, the club sponsored and organized "Women Aware", a special day for all women in the community. The day included a guest speaker, a series of workshops on topics of interest

to women, and films. Club members are hopeful the success of the first Women Aware can be repeated next spring.

INVOLVEMENT

Club members' involvement in the community is not limited in their activities with the club. Members are involved with the

Committee of Adjustments for Halton Hills, the Halton Hills Library Board, the Recreation Advisory Board, Committee, the Georgetown Y.M.Y.W.C.A., the Canadian Cancer Society, the Halton board of education committee, the Credit Valley Artisans and the Halton District Health Council.

The University Women's Club has general meetings the first Tuesday of each month with a guest speaker. The speaker portion of the meeting is open to members of the public who wish to attend.

Membership in the club now stands at over 90 women, and new members are always welcome.



Members of the University Women's Club kicked up their heels last spring over the success of Women Aware, the day-long event included workshops and films on topics of interest to women. (Herald photo)

About the Hills

Porter lectures

Dr. Arthur Porter, chairman of the Royal Commission on Electric Power Planning, will be giving a lecture entitled "Energy Plans for the Future" at the University Centre, University of Guelph, October 17. Admission to the lecture, which begins at 12 noon, is free.

Walk-a-jog-athon

Pre-registration for the Y.W.Y.M.C.A. "Walk-a-jog-athon" will be held at the Y's Mountainview South offices (St. Andrew's United Church) October 16. The event will begin at the Georgetown fair grounds at 9:00 a.m. October 18 with participants running, walking or jogging the half mile track for a maximum of 20 laps. Refreshments will be served. Pledges will be collected and turned into the Y office October 23.

Tag day

Town council has given the 676 Lorne Scots army cadets permission to hold a tag day in Georgetown October 23, 24 and 25.

Auxiliary grows

The Georgetown and District Hospital Memorial Auxiliary enrolled its first male member last week, and the gentleman has already "proved himself a valuable asset", a spokesman for the auxiliary said. The auxiliary is hoping that other men with a few hours to spare each week will also consider joining the auxiliary. A new venture for the auxiliary is a Cake Fair, to be held early in November. Anyone interested in cake decoration is invited to bake and decorate a cake, and donate it to the auxiliary for display. Information on the sale is available from Inez Crichton at 677-6842 or Pat McCarthy at 677-6248.