

# Halton W.I. marks 90th birthday with celebration

By RUTH KRANENDONK, P.R.O.  
Herald Special

We can just wish to be as fit when we are 90 years old. A special Birthday Party was held at Nassagaweya Community on Sunday, November 24. Halton District Women's Institute is celebrating 90 years of good health and success. Former District Presidents and Secretaries were special guests for the day. Guest speaker was Margaret Eberle, President-Elect of the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario.

If Adelaide Hoodless were living in 1991, I wonder if she would have thought that her founding organization would still be alive and well. When she lost her eighteen month old baby in the late 1800's from being fed contaminated milk, she was determined to teach other women about the need to be educated. She managed to raise such an awareness that 101 women attended the first meeting on February 19, 1897 in Stoney Creek.

On February 2, 1901, four years after the very first Women's Institute meeting was held, Halton County organized their first meeting. Way back then, ten ladies met in Milton to form the beginnings of what would still be an active organization 90 years later. The first Branch was Campbellville, who met until 1913. They then disbanded and took a 26-year vacation until 1939 when they reorganized and are still an active branch today. The youngest branch in Halton is Silver Wood Branch which was formed in 1951. Many branches have come and gone since 1901, but today, 90 years down the road, you will find 11 branches which include 237 members.

"For Home and Country," the motto of the Women's Institute had its early test of strength during World Wars I and II. Always meeting whatever need arose and not requesting recognition, the W.I. worked diligently to meet the enormous need of both civilians and soldiers. By providing clothing and food to victims of disasters over the years, you will still find today that if there is a need in the community, the Women's Institute members are quietly there to help in whatever way they can. Fund raising by W.I. branches is turned back into the community in many areas including Women's shelters, Salvation Army, Food Banks, Cancer Society, and many other community services.

The Women's Institutes have conducted endless Short Courses on everything under the sun including gardening, sewing, knitting, cooking, quilting, and personal development. These courses are still a popular part of the organization.

It is always rewarding when you have made a contribution toward the success of young people. School children must have found it pretty mundane back then without music in the schools. It wasn't until 1924 when the Halton Women's Institutes introduced the first musical instruction. From this came the Halton Music Festival, which was a highlight for school children for many years.

The 4-H program in Halton has been supported by the Women's Institutes for many years. You will still find today that a good number of 4-H Leaders are also Women's Institute Members. Of course there are also male 4-H Leaders, but perhaps you should ask them if their mother is or was an Institute member! Many branches support individual 4-H Clubs financially.

The Women's Institutes in Halton have given Scholarships to 4-H members who are furthering their studies beyond high school. This award is given each year to a deserving member who is selected by the Scholarship Committee. The first recipient of

the Dr. Ethel Chapman Scholarship in 1971 was Cathy Lasby. Twenty years later, it's interesting to see Cathy very busy in her career running her own marketing firm, Preferred Agri-Marketing in Guelph. The 1991 recipient of the Scholarship is Jennifer Livock of Oakville. Jennifer is enrolled in Agri-Business at the University of Guelph. We wish Jennifer good luck as she works towards her goals.

The Halton Women's Institute Bursary is another award given to 4-H members entering post-secondary school. The 1991 recipient is Heather Dubuc of Limehouse. Heather is attending the University of Toronto in Honors Bachelor of Arts course where she hopes to become a high school teacher. We wish Heather the best of luck in her future.

Lady Tweedsmuir, wife of Canada's Governor General, and an Institute member in England, visited Canada in 1936. While visiting a branch in eastern Ontario, she stressed the importance of preserving the heritage of our developing land. Today the Tweedsmuir Histories of the Women's Institutes is a very well known wealth of information for many historians.

Very often Historical Societies contact the branches in Halton for information which has been well documented by Institute Curators since Lady Tweedsmuir initiated them.

Another Halton W.I. project was the publishing of "A History and Atlas of Halton County" compiled by Ben Case of Georgetown. This was completed in 1980 with the printing of 1000 books.

The Women's Institute is still very much an educational organization. It has influenced many government issues through resolutions. The environment and recycling has been an ongoing concern. The promotion of the 'Blue Bag' has been well received in Halton and throughout Ontario. The most recent resolution from the Women's Institutes which has just become law is "The Living Will".

Where might you have seen Halton Women's Institute members in 1991?

A very worthwhile program was conducted called "Surgery - A Necessity Or a Choice?". Approximately 30 participants learned how to be aware of their bodies and to thoroughly investigate all avenues in the health care system. Mary Jane Wingfield from Ashgrove Branch and Edith Turner from Silver Wood Branch were the facilitators for this course.

The Women's Institutes were invited by the Halton Agricultural Society to take part in "Kids Day" at Milton Fair. Many rural organizations took part in this educational day. More than 2,000 children from different schools in Halton attended.

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Two members of the Halton District Women's Institute, (left to right), Eve Martin, President; and Maxine Ellerby, President - 1952-54; kicked off the institute's 90th anniversary recently with a cake-cutting ceremony. (Photo submitted)

# FITNESS

# FOR CHRISTMAS

<p><b>HEALTH RISK APPRAISAL</b></p> <p>Those you care for will appreciate the computerized Health Risk Appraisal administered by a fitness counsellor. They will learn at what age they are presently living at according to their lifestyle.</p> <p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">\$5<sup>00</sup></p>	<p><b>3 DAY PASS</b></p> <p>Let us introduce your friends and family to our fitness facilities and professional staff. A three day pass is an economical way to see what our club has to offer.</p> <p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">\$10<sup>00</sup></p>
<p><b>30 DAY TRIAL MEMBERSHIP</b></p> <p>Friends and family will love our Christmas idea. The 30 DAY Trial Membership will entitle a person to use our Weight Room, LifeSteps, LifeCycles and participate in fitness classes from December 27, 1991 to January 27, 1992.</p> <p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">\$30<sup>00</sup></p>	<p><b>COMPUTERIZED FITNESS ASSESSMENT</b></p> <p>A computerized fitness assessment is a great motivator for people who want to know what they need to do to improve their fitness level.</p> <p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">\$30<sup>00</sup></p>
<p><b>GIFT PACKAGE COMBINATION</b></p> <p>We have combined our 30 Day Trial Membership with a Fitness Assessment and a Health Risk Appraisal. This super gift pack is sure to let that special someone know just how much you really care about them.</p> <p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">FOR ONLY \$50<sup>00</sup></p>	

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