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Pictured above are this year's Womens Institute Halton District Directors, from left to right: Verna Bird (Ashgrove), Kathleen Alder (Dublin), Marvis Wheldon (Nelson), Gienna Smith (PAC), Glenda Benton (Limehouse), Norma Tripp (Norval), Margaret Pearson (Scotch Block), and Beth Haines (Silver-Wood).

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Local WIs working for tomorrow

By DEBORAH QUAILE

The traditions and activities may have changed but the idea of women uniting together to better their families and their communities has apparently remained intact judging from the interest sparked at the Halton area's annual meeting.

The Annual District Women's Institute Meeting had a show of new District Directors from all around the North Halton area.

Current Directors are as follows: Verna Byrd, Ashgrove; Marvis Wheldon, Nelson; Glenda Benton, Limehouse; Margaret Pearson, Scotch Block; Kathleen Alder,

Dublin; Glenna Smith, PAC; Norma Tripp, Norval; and Beth Haines, Silver-Wood.

"The WI is a group with a long history. It's a worldwide organization and many of the local branches are doing very well," says Ros Edwards of Silver-Wood Women's Institute.

Adelaide Hoodless followed her vision to form the first Women's Institute at Stoney Creek in 1897, to help women become more knowledgeable about operating an efficient home. Through incredibly rapid growth, in three years there were 33 branches and over 1,600 members.

As the group spread across Canada, the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario (FWIO) and the Federated Women's Institutes of Canada (FWIC) were formed, and then the concept spread to England.

Some of the purposes of the groups include introducing fun and friendship at monthly meetings through crafts, physical activity, tours and speakers. Members initiate programs to strengthen the family, promote good family life skills through education programs, support projects such as recycling and improving parental skills, and encourage responsible citizenship.

Groups interpret and record local history, compiling it in

Tweedsmuir History Books and work with museums, libraries and schools. Especially important in rural areas are the improvements to health, nutrition and safety in the home; partnerships with environmental, safety and health organizations; and working toward healthy physical and mental environments.

The organization's motto, "For Home and Country", is the impetus behind the members' ability to identify and act on local, national and global issues; participate in projects in agriculture, industry and education; revitalize community spirit; lobby for safer, healthier communities; and study international affairs, customs and issues.

Mrs. Edwards is one of many vital members from the area who promote the Women's Institute in locations such as the Georgetown Mall, at Country Heritage Park in Milton, and the Royal Winter Fair. Volunteers from various WI branches travel to Toronto to support the group at the fair; Mrs. Edwards spoke with more than 1,000 people last year alone at the RWF.

Halton County women (urban and rural) who are interested in joining are invited to call Ros Edwards at Silver-Wood at 905-877-6457.

This year we're celebrating the 100th Anniversary of the Teddy Bear

with our

"Bear of the Month" Contest

Every month a new themed, classic bear is awarded to one lucky individual - and that individual could be you!

Enter today, it's easy.

This month win
"Christopher Scott"
 (Retail Value \$80.00)

Ballot Box located next to Peggy's, where Christopher Scott is currently on display.

To Enter
 Each ballot must be accompanied by 5 receipts from different stores within Milton Mall, and dated August 1 - 31, 2002.

Ballots are available in stores.

Good Luck!

Draw Date
 for Christopher Scott
 September 3, 2002

Winner will be notified by phone, same day.

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