

Women's Lib Just 'Old Hat', Fight Began In 1897 With WI

OTTAWA (CP) — The women's liberation movement isn't really new, says Mrs. John McLean, president of the Federated Women's Institutes of Canada (FWIC). The institutes achieved federation in 1919, but women started doing things that had to be done long before that, she said in an interview.

It all began when Adelaide Hunter Hoodless of Hamilton lost her 18-month-old son because she didn't know she should boil raw milk.

The anguished mother, determined to do all she could to help others and bring within reach of all women the education necessary to prevent similar tragedies, began a campaign for household science classes in schools.

From that evolved the idea for a women's institute, established in Stoney Creek, Ont., in February, 1897.

The organization was committed to "improving physical, intellectual and cultural conditions in the home and raising the standard of homemaking," early minute of their meetings record.

These were rural women and with the help of farm organizations in a predominantly rural Canada the idea spread across the country.

FEDERATION FORMED

In 1919 delegates from the provinces met in Winnipeg and the result was the Federated Women's Institutes of Canada, with the blessing of the federal agriculture department.

Since then women's institutes have reached a national membership of 70,000 and a world-wide fellowship of eight million countrywomen.

Now, with a growing number leaving the farms for urban life, the FWIC membership has levelled off at 57,000.

Mrs. McLean is a 47-year-old mother of three from Eureka, N.S., a Sunday-school teacher, church treasurer, 4-H leader and active in other organizations in Pictou County. She said the institute encourage members to take active part in everything.

"We're criticized by many as being an older women's organization," she said, with some women's liberation groups regarding the institutes as outdated.

"We emphasize the importance of the family in our society. I think the women's

institute has been women's lib for a long time, but it does not mean we went out and burned our bras and did all these other ridiculous things that they do. We've been fighting for equal rights. . . . It's old hat to us.

"If there's a job to fill, whether it be on a school board, a municipal council or as a member of the legislature, we train our women to be ready to take on any of these positions.

"If there is a need, we fill it."

20-YEAR MEMBER

Mrs. McLean, a soft-spoken, blue-eyed blonde who was elected president at the institutes' triennial convention in Banff last June, has been a member of the organization for more than 20 years.

For the next three years she will divide her time between the family dairy farm,

the FWIC's National Office here and visits to provincial organizations.

Among the recent achievements of provincial institutes that Mrs. McLean takes pride in are:

—The Alexandria Solarium and Crippled Children's hospital in Vancouver.

—Alberta's free radium treatment under the Canadian Cancer Society.

—A New Brunswick home for the aged.

—Mobile facilities of Prince Edward Island's health program, which ensure adequate health protection in outlying areas.

—The Ontario branch's work in Ceylon, Korea and Greece in public health projects.

—Saskatchewan's home-makers' club, which work at improving the standard of living of Indian women.



ADELAIDE HOODLESS

\$40,000 Has Been Spent On Erland Lee Home

STONEY CREEK, Ont. (CP) — The Ontario Women's Institute has spent \$40,000 for the Erland Lee home and plans to maintain it as a shrine and showplace for people to see where the WI was born.

Mr. Lee was the man who invited Adelaide Hunter Hoodless to speak to 101 women at a

ladies' night at the South Wentworth Farmer's Institute February 19, 1897.

The immediate result was another meeting, held six days later, at which Mrs. Hoodless was elected honorary president and Mrs. E. D. Smith of Winoona, president of a new women's organization.

Mrs. Austin Zoeller of New Hamburg, chairman of the Erland Lee Home committee, says Mr. Lee drew up the original constitution and Mrs. Lee handwrote it at a dining room table in the old house.

Mrs. Zoeller says the home remained in the Lee family until the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario (FWIO) bought it, after several years of heart-searching over the problems involved in operating it.

BEING RESTORED

They are restoring it to the 1850s, the era when it was built. She says donations of furniture have come in from institute members, and the bedrooms and dining room now are complete.

With the official opening Aug. 9, Mrs. Zoeller says several hundred people have already gone through it every week.

As yet, it is being maintained on the proceeds of a donations box and volunteer help. The 30,000 members in the province are being assessed 10 cents a year each to build a maintenance fund, but that will take time, and the federation is hoping for some interim help from the secretary of state.

The idea to buy the home came to the FWIO originally from the Wentworth County chapter. The county has helped the cause, as have Saltfleet Township and Stoney Creek, plus the provincial home economics branch.

Mrs. Zoeller says one member donated \$5,000 and the National Federation of Women's Institutes in England sent £100. The rest has been raised by the FWIO and she says the home will be a provincial project for a long time to come.

How Can I?

Q. How can I remove mildew that has gathered in white patches on leather-bound books, traveling bags and other leather articles?

A. By rubbing thick, clear petroleum jelly liberally over the mildewed areas, allowing this to remain on a while, then wiping off with a dry cloth. This treatment is also a good preservative for the leather.

A. These unwelcome guests are allergic to cucumber skin. Keep it where the ants congregate and they will soon scam.

Q. How can I avoid lumpiness in my gravy when I am thickening it with flour?

A. By mixing a little cornstarch with your flour.

Q. How can I improvise a hair shampoo when I am out of the real thing?

A. Hubby's shaving cream makes a very good dather for the hair.