

SEWING CLASS - LASKAY W.I.



Back from left.

Mrs. John Bowen

Joyce Porter

Mrs. John Gillies

Mary Teasdale

Mrs. Wm. Boys

Mearl Hamilton

Mrs. John Watson

Vera Gillies

Front Row.

Dorothy Bowen

Pauline Campbell

Pauline Campbell

Gertie Patton

Mrs. A. Marshall

Mrs. T. Smeltzer

60th ANNIVERSARY OF INSTITUTES.

On February, 12, 1957, at our regular meeting held at Laskay Institute Hall, we, like other Institutes all across Canada celebrated the 60th Birthday of the Founding of Institute work, started at Stoney Creek, Ont., on February 19th, 1897 by the founder, Adelaide Hoodless.

Miss Vera Hunter gave a very full and descriptive outline of the founding and growth of Women's Institute work, and their aims and purpose, and the establishment of Home Economics Services.

At a social half hour after the meeting, a beautiful Birthday Cake was the highlight and is always a pleasant memory. The cake was decorated in Institute colors with Institute Crest, candles, etc.

The influence of the Women's Institute has been felt throughout this community. We can never sit back and rest on the laurels of our Mothers and Grandmothers; but having started life with such advantages we must advance a little farther, to give the world more in the way of useful service. Since we are but stewards in this vineyard, let us build a solid foundation for the coming generations so that the world may be a little better place because we have passed this way.

Laskay Women's Institute is the second oldest Branch in King Township, organized in 1908.

This picture was taken in September, 1956, when these three members of Laskay Women's Institute were honored with certificates of Life Members and Life Member Pins.

The occasion held at our regular meeting in the Hall which was Mrs. G.D. Paton's 82nd birthday.

Left to right -
Mrs. L.J. Glass,
Mrs. G.D. Paton,
Mrs. P. Forester.



HISTORY OF INSTITUTE HALL

Senator David Reesor of Markham owned part of Lot 4 on concession 6, on the East side. This was surveyed by George McPhillips, the plan being registered in North York Registry Office. (A photograph of the map is shown.)

Senator Reesor donated land, one-fifth~~th~~ acre, lot 20, upon which to build a Temperance Hall. The Sons of Temperance formed a division, No.220, and erected a hall, which was opened about New Years, 1859. The Hall was not fully completed when the division became dormant. It was subsequently re-organized about 1888 and flourished under the energetic work of some of the members.

About the time local option came into force, the division was disbanded and the Hall turned over to the Laskay Branch of the Women's Institute. According to assessment Roll at township office, Nobleton, the Hall was under the name of Thomas Burgess, Worthy Patriarch from the year 1850, and was exempt from taxes while a Temperance Hall.

The first mention of the Temperance Hall in the Institute Minute Books was in October, 1914. In 1914 a Committee was appointed by the Institute, consisting of Mrs. John Watson, Mrs. Wm. Boys and Miss Mary Teasdale, who were to see what was needed and report. Concerts were held during the year to raise money for repairs.

1915 - In April of this year back taxes were paid, a sum of \$4.37, then in December \$1.11. In December shingles were purchased - \$19.52.

1915-16 - In this term \$63.43 was raised for hall benefit. In June 1916 a board of trustees was elected, namely, Mrs. A.McMurchy, Mrs. Wm. Boys - Mrs. W. Monkman.

1917 - Cups and saucers were bought, plans were made to paint the Hall and varnish the wood work. A shed at the back of the Hall was auctioned off for \$16.20 to Mel. McCallum.

<u>1917-18 - Hall Receipts.</u>		<u>Expenditures.</u>	
Concert, sale of shed		Shingles -	\$24.35
Box social,	\$59.76	glass-taxes	
prev. balance	\$35.27	plaster, nails,	
	\$95.03	express & work	\$43.72
			\$68.07

1925-26 - As near as we can determine this is when the hall was jacked up and sills put in. A piano was also bought.

1929 - in July a chimney was built, hall painted. Geo. Williams built the chimney.

Three coats of paint were put on hall, windows puttied and painted.

Mr. Geo. Patton was paid \$185.00



HISTORY OF INSTITUTE HALL CONT'D.

- 1930 - In July-September, the wiring of the Hall was completed. In January the hall cupboards were built, cups and saucers bought.
- 1933 - Hardwood floor laid - platform 1.
- 1935 - Hardwood floor laid - main floor. Duncan Ross paid \$150.00
- 1936-37 - A piano was bought for \$75.00 - tuning \$4.00,
Spoons costing \$1.80 - tables \$21.00
- 1937-38 - Tables amounting to \$24.00 were bought.
- 1939-40 - Chairs costing \$100.83 were purchased
- 1941 - School was held in Hall for three months.
- 1945 - About this time the Hall was beginning to show the need of repairs and re-painting. It was felt in this day and age that the Institute members should make sure of ownership of the Hall and Property before spending too much money on it, the Hall having been handed over by word of mouth. A committee was named, and a lawyer was consulted. It was found that a clause in the deed would not permit it being transferred. A great deal of time elapsed during investigation and we were advised to not pay the taxes for three years, and the property would be put up for tax sale. It sure was a great relief in December 1953 when the delegation learned at Nobleton Hall that there were no bids against us, much to the credit of Township Clerk, Mr. Harold Rose.
- 1954 - Plans were made to go ahead, repair and paint the hall. Some new window sills, new floor and sill in lobby, new sidewalks to North and east doors, insulated ceiling, new insul brick siding, new rood, windows paned and puttied, woodwork inside all painted. The money was raised since 1945, by bazaars, strawberry and oyster suppers, collections and euchres.
- 1954-55 - Material and Labour for Laskay Hall.
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| Shingles, tarpaper, valley iron and nails. | \$238.27 |
| | 6.91 |
| Stone siding, insulation paper - 35 panes glass-putty, | 220.99 |
| | 29.00 |
| Paint - \$29.00-Aubrey Campbell painting | 96.35 |
| Construction & Labour | 302.27 |
| | <hr/> |
| | \$893.79 |
- 1955 - On February 10th ,1955 the secretary received the tax deed in the mail and has since had it registered and banked.

Newmarket, Ont.

June 12, 1928.

Mrs. Sandy MacMurchy,

Strange, Ont.

Dear Mrs. McMurchy:-

Yours of the 5th just reached me to-day as I have been away for nearly a week attending the Toronto Conference of the United Church of Canada, and in the accumulated mail on my return to the office to-day I found your letter.

As you know I would be only too pleased to give you any information possible with reference to the old Temperance Hall at Laskay, and would just state from memory, as I have no other record, some incidents in connection with its early history. A "Sons of Temperance Lodge" was established in that Hall about the year 1870, of which I was one of the charter members. The building itself as I recollect it apparently had been empty and not used for some time, as it was only a shell, not even being lathed and plastered.

The members of the division began to see what could be done to put the Hall in some proper shape. As you can readily understand we had no money in those days, but what we did was, a number of the young men met at the Hall in the evening and put the laths on to save expense. We then got a man to plaster it for which we had to pay. There was other fixings that required to be done and going as far as we felt our finances would permit we found we had established a little debt, so a few of the members decided to advance the money for the annual fees for several years ahead and it was pretty hard to get the money to do it, the most of it, and pay our debts and our money was placed at our credit on our dues account. At that time men only were allowed under the constitution of the "Sons of Temperance" to become members of the Lodge.

The Lodge prospered during this next few years and the building being improved some not only with an advantage to the Lodge meetings but also became a meeting place for other gatherings.

About this time the Lodge established an annual tea-party which was held on New Years' night. This, for a number of years was an event in all that section of country, the hall being crowded on every occasion, and from which funds were received to help in various improvements. An organ was bought and put in, and then the constitution of the Order was changed permitting the ladies to attend, and become members. As you can easily understand how this brightened up for all of us our evening gatherings, and I have reason to believe that as a result of this change in the constitution of the Order, many happy marriages took place in that neighborhood.

In the passing years the hall got entirely too small for our annual gathering, and also for many other gatherings that were held, for the convenience of the community. After much deliberation and a great deal of thought as to how it would ever be paid for, it was finally decided to build a large addition, to the west of the building. This cost, for those days, quite a sum of money, but it was successfully completed and the building in its new form became of greater value for meetings of various kinds.

Then after many years the Lodge discontinued, and somewhere about this time, owing to the loss by fire of our business at Kinghorn, we removed to Newmarket, and from that time on you will be more familiar with what uses were made of the hall until the time the ladies of the neighborhood took charge of the situation and made many improvements, the result of which surprised me when, accepting an invitation to be present at the re-opening after all these improvements were completed, and I can assure you it gave me a great deal of pleasure to see the old hall renovated and put into such a splendid condition for the use of community gatherings, many of them under the direction of the ladies of the neighborhood, and it is to be hoped it will long fill that very useful place in Laskay and surrounding country.

Mrs. Sandy McMurchy

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I can assure you as I look back to those early years of that Temperance Lodge, there were quite a few young men at that date who have owed a great deal during their future lives as a result of debates and other kinds of entertainment which gave them an opportunity to learn to express themselves on questions of interest to the public and on the public platform in the years that followed.

q You may pick something out of this which will be of interest and allow me to wish the Women's Institute of York County a most successful and profitable meeting on Thursday next June 14th.

With very kind personal regards, and best wishes, I remain

EJD/FE

Yours sincerely,

E. J. Davis (Signed).

WOMEN'S INSTITUTE HISTORY

1897-1949

The first women's Institute was organized at Stoney Creek, Ontario, in 1897, the founder of the movement, Mrs. Adelaide Hoodless born in 1857 close to St. George, Ontario, and moving to Stoney Creek on her marriage.

When Adelaide Hoodless on the death of her child, realized the inadequacy in knowing how to care and feed her baby, the thought came to her, if agricultural colleges taught men how to care and feed their animals for better health and growth, was it not more important that women be given training in the care of their children and homes. As a result of this thinking, the first Women's Institute meeting was held at Stoney Creek on February 19th, 1897.

A request was sent to the Minister of Agriculture asking for support and assistance, this support was gladly given; at first in forms of grants and later, government lecturers were appointed to speak to Women's Institutes and to help in their organization. Down through the years this assistance has increased and as the Institute has grown in numbers and responsibility, so also have the services from the Department of Agriculture increased and improved; and now provides an Extension service in Home Economics for all rural women and girls.

At the beginning the Superintendent of Farmer's Institutes acted as Superintendent of W.I.'s., and in 1899 under the Farmer's superintendent Miss Laura Rose was appointed first government lecturer and organizer of Women's Institute. More staff were added and more Institutes grew into being. In 1902 a whole day was planned for the women at the Session of Experimental Union at Guelph, thus the first W.I. Convention came into being.

The next year 1903, the Women's meetings were held in the then new MacDonald Institute Hall, O.A.C., Guelph and 116 women from 53 Institutes gathered.

By 1914 the numbers had so increased that it was considered wise to divide the province into three convention areas, London, Toronto and Ottawa. With three conventions a certain loss in Provincial Unity was the natural result, hence in 1914 a Provincial Advisory committee was appointed. By 1916 there were 17 representatives elected, one for each of the 17 subdivisions in the Province. As an outgrowth of this advisory committee our first Provincial board was formed and the F.W.I.O. (Federated Women's Instit-

WOMEN'S INSTITUTE HISTORY (Cont'd)

ute of Ontario), came into being by formal resolution, February 7th, 1919. Later in the same month the F.W.I. of Canada was organized. By 1933, there were 13 conventions areas.

By 1910 there was a desire for teachers trained as specialists and qualified to demonstrate the arts of foods and cookery, clothing and other Home Economic topics. By 1912-13 educational short courses were taken right into the rural communities for the benefit of those who could not leave their home. Home nursing training was beneficial, too.

In the fall of 1934 a new forward step was taken when Miss Bess McDermaid, a qualified Home Economist became Superintendent of W.I. and ever since that time a University Graduate in this field has held Home Economics position. In post war years the programme has been revived and broadened to include greater variety in Home crafts, home furnishings and Psychology for the Homemaker.

Methods have changed, objectives outlined at the time of inception of Institutes can be met more adequately now than in 1897 but the basic aims are the same. The aims as set forth today are--

1. To help women acquire sound and approved practices for greater home efficiency.
2. To discover, stimulate and train leaders.
3. To develop a more abundant life in our rural communities and a deeper appreciation of the things near at hand.
4. To develop better, happier and more useful citizens.

In 1946, the title was changed to Womens Institute Branch and Home Economics servive, and the title of Superintendent was changed to that of director.

The Provincial Board Directors of the F.W.I.O. elected by W.I. members, meet twice a year to outline the policy of the O.W.I.

The Board Directors elect the Provincial President, hence the Provincial President is the elected head of F.W.I.O.

The Director, Women's Institute Branch and Home Economic Service is a member of the Provincial Board, acts as advisor and Councillor to the F.W.I.O. and it's board of directors and as liason between the F.W.I.O., and the Department of Agriculture.

WOMEN'S INSTITUTE HISTORY (Cont'd)

The purpose of the Provincial Board of the F.W.I.O. is

1. To co-ordinate the work of the W.I.'s of Ontario.
2. To unite the province and provide official representation in the F.W.I.O of Canada, the associated country women of the world and other organizations.
3. To express the views of the local institutes on all matters of Provincial or national importance within the scope of W.I. work and responsibility.
4. To Co-operate with the Ontario Dept. of Agriculture to improve educational, social and economic conditions in the province.

This editorial comment was written by a former director, Miss Anna P. Lewis and printed in the "Winter, 1949", issue of Home and Country magazine, published quarterly and distributed through the secretaries of Women Institutes to the Institute members.

OUR OPENING ODE

A goodly thing it is to meet
In friendship's circle bright,
Where nothing stains the pleasure sweet
Or dims the radiant light.
No unkind word our lips shall pass,
No envy sour the mind,
But each shall seek the common weal,
The good of all mankind.
