

gave a demonstration on icing cakes.

Mr. Adlam from the Otter Creek Conservation Authority.

District Officers every two years.

Mrs. Erma Holbeck of Simcoe demonstrated making Bows.

Mrs. C.W. Sinckair, Aylmer, Education and Citizenship.

Mrs. Walter Rogers of Sparta on her trip "Down the Meditterean Sea".

Miss Marie Elson, Health Nurse, St.Thomas.

Wm. Miles "Iris King" Ingersoll, Talk and slides on "Iris".

Mrs. Alice Mann, Yarmouth Centre "Home Economics".

Mr. Harbert A. Stevens, principal Aylmer high school, Citizenship & Education.

Mrs. Louise McDonald, Tillsonburg Retarded Children school.

Have made substantial donations to the Elgin County Pioneer Museum which now is paid for in full and is almost self-sustaining.

Donations to the United Welfare Service for Elgin County besides other small donations to different things as they come up.

We still continue to go on Bus trips each year.

Girls clubs are sponsored in the Home making Clubs every now and again.

We have a Christmas gift exchange with our members and also with our Friendship Branch of the W.I. at Merstham, England.

We have catered to large banquets in Aylmer High school and in the Aylmer Arena.

Besides having an exhibit at Aylmer Fair each year, the last two years we have served Tea and cookies in the Tea Room upstairs in the Crystal Palace.

We send Delegates to the Officers Rally at Guelph in May.

1957-58

Our Membership this year-will be 90 but in 1955 our membership was 92. We are celebrating our Fifieth Anniversary on Wed. Nov. 13th 1957.

# Bayham Institute Observes Fifty-Fifth Anniversary

RICHMOND (C) — Mrs. Harry Stewart, Mrs. Elton Jackson, Mrs. Willis Marr and Mrs. Pauline Davidson were joint hostesses at the Richmond United Church for the Bayham Women's Institute fifty-fifth anniversary.

The president Mrs. Fred James presided and read an opening poem "Neighbors." Mrs. John Morse gave the welcome address. Roll call was answered by the six visiting Institutes. The Secretary Mrs. G. N. Roloson read greetings from the F.W.I.O. board member Mrs. Mervin Hicks who was unable to be present due to another engagement.

Memorial service was in charge of Mrs. Fred James and Mrs. C. D. Kennedy, the District president. Two minutes of silence was observed for the five members who have passed away since the 50th Anniversary of the W.I. Mrs. John McCormick, soloist, sang "Beyond the Sunset" with Mrs. James Fuller as pianist.

Mrs. Arthur Benner introduced the two living chartered members, the first Mrs. H. L. Godwin was presented with a beautiful Christmas corsage and a gift was sent to the other member, Mrs. Odber McGregor of Aylmer, who due to illness was unable to be present.

Thought for the month was given by Mrs. Willis Marr "God is no respecter of persons, black or white, red or yellow, united we stand, divided we fall." Some of the fourth and fifth grade of boys and girls sang a number of pieces with their teacher Mrs. Robert Morse as pianist. Mrs. Morse presented each child with a chocolate bar for their singing.

Mrs. Willis Marr introduced the guest speaker, Rev. Albert Cook of the Straffordville United Church,

who gave a very instructive talk on Citizenship and Education. He was thanked by Mrs. Marr and presented with a gift on behalf of the members.

Piano solo was played by Mrs. James Fuller. Mrs. Ward Benner gave a full account of the different projects and the work that the members had done during the past five years.

Mrs. Arthur Benner presented prizes to the following: to the 55th lady who registered, Mrs. Ethel Wheatley, Aylmer; to the one who came the farthest distance, Mrs. J. C. Penhale, St. Thomas; to the one with a birthday the nearest the 13th, Mrs. Stanley James, Calton.

Courtesy remarks were given by Mrs. Von Brown.

After singing the Queen, Mrs. K. B. Passmore gave the closing prayer.

The president gave everyone an invitation to tea in the basement and announced the apron sale and food table, also made mention of the "Name Quilt" which was made for this Anniversary and was on display along with an aluminum etched tray with the Institute Crest in the center. This tray was made and donated to the Institute by one of their members Mrs. Croft Garnham. Tickets will be sold on this tray in the near future along with tickets on a Florida Shell TV lamp donated by Mrs. Nelson Ward. Tickets may be bought from the President or Secretary or from members.

The tea table was prettily decorated with a lace cloth, candles, etc. centered with an Anniversary cake decorated by one of the members. Tea was poured by Mrs. H. L. Godwin and Mrs. Fred James. The Anniversary cake was cut by Mrs. G. N. Roloson. When the cake was re-

moved the tea table was centered with an arrangement of flowers in the Institute colors of blue and gold, donated by the president.

Lunch was served by Mrs. Charles Laing and her assistants. A large box of gifts were received for the patients at the Ontario Hospital, St. Thomas.

The apron sale in charge of Mrs. Ward Benner and Mrs. Arnold Stansell, and the food table in charge of Mrs. Jesse Van Patter, Mrs. Harry Matthews, Mrs. Leon Carter and Mrs. Stuart Minors was a success.

Guests were present from St. Thomas, Aylmer, Springfield, Corinth, Eden, Calton and Lakeview.

When the Bayham Womens Institute celebrated their fifty-fifth anniversary in the Richmond United Church a number of neighboring guests made a request that we sent to the press the main part of Mrs. Ward Benner's talk so the public would have a good idea of what work the W.I. does.

"Highlights of the past five years have been the exceptionally fine programmes presented each month, convened and contributed to by the members themselves, they have been outstanding in education and interest and have included addresses, demonstrations in millinery, flower arrangements, fancy relish dishes, talks on Home furnishings and home decoration; travel talks illustrated by pictures; apron parades etc., and many others.

In honor of former members of the community who have passed on and the men of the community who gave their lives in their country's service the Bayham Womens Institute contributes to the up-keep of the Richmond Cemetery and sponsors a Decoration Day service each summer.

In honor too of the pioneers of Elgin County our members have contributed generously to the establishment and expansion of the Elgin County Museum.

It has been our privilege during the past five years to help the various welfare organizations not only with gifts of money but in actual service, these include "Woodedan Camp" for crippled children at London, Mental Health Association, Multiple Sclerosis Society, Elgin Cancer Society, Schools for Retarded Children at St. Thomas and Tillsonburg, United Welfare Services and T.B. Survey and Baby Clinics at Aylmer and Straffordville.

For the past several years the Bayham Womens Institute has been a regular exhibitor in the Womens Institute Section at Aylmer Fair and for a few years served tea and provided a place for weary fair goers to rest.

Loyal support has always been given to the Provincial Dominion and overseas organizations of the Womens Institutes namely the F.W.I.O., F.W.I.C. and A.C.C.W. and donations have been sent to the Adelaide Hoodless Home and to the Scholarship Fund, Pennies for Friendship Fund, the Ceylon Fund and to needy families.

During the last war a Friendship link was formed with a W.I. group at Mersham, England with whom we exchange letters and gifts.

Two years ago we adopted a ten year old girl who is in residence at the Caribbean Christian Centre for the deaf at Spur Tree, Jamaica, West Indies. We correspond with her and send gifts.

A bus trip to some point of interest or education is a feature of each summers activities. This year the trip to Toronto included a visit to the Parliament Buildings, the Museum, Casa Loma, and Centre Island.

At our December meeting we enjoyed the exchange of Christmas gifts and learn who our unknown friend of the past year has been.

We have accepted and enjoyed the short courses provided by the Department of Agriculture, W. I. Branch and delegates have attended the Officers Conferences at Guelph and also the London Area Convention.



Left Seated - Mrs H. L. Godwin.  
Mrs Fred James.  
Left - Mrs Willis Marr



Left Seated - Mrs H. L. Godwin.  
~~Mrs~~ Mrs Fred James.  
Left - Mrs Willie Marr

## RICHMOND VILLAGE

This Village of Richmond, on the bank of Big Otter, in Bayham - the east Township of Elgin County - was part of the Talbot Land Grant of 1803.

From the time of the conquest in Upper Canada (1763 - 1788) the place where Richmond is (but not named then) was part of the British Colony of Quebec. In 1788 it became part of the District of Heese. In 1792 it was included in the Western District of Upper Canada under Governor Sir John Graves Simcoe. According to Counties it was in Norfolk.

In 1798 an act was passed naming Townships for Norfolk and Middlesex but Bayham and Malahide were not surveyed or included in either County. Middlesex, however, included all the other Townships of Elgin County. The explanation for this omission was doubtless the unfavourable report of an assistant surveyor. The report stated that having observed the banks along Lake Erie in this district to be yellow and white sand, very high and inaccessible from the lake level, it was considered unsuitable for early settlement. Hence Townships were laid out first along the Thames River.

Richmond, some seven miles east of Aylmer, on the Talbot Road, possesses historic interest as one of the oldest villages in the County. From 1836-37 - 1855, Richmond was a larger place than Aylmer. However, following the railroad in 1871 Aylmer began to expand - Richmond's dream of growing to be a town was not fulfilled.

The real settlement of Richmond began in 1811 when James Gibbons and Joseph DeFields built their log huts in the dense pine forests between the two Otter creeks. Mr. Gibbons selected a spot, near the bridge, north of the present Talbot Road, but then only a blazed trail through the woods. Joseph De Fields was the first Magistrate (1818-1832).

The name, "Richmond", came from the Duke of Richmond, whose good Lady gave a Ball the night before the Battle of Waterloo. The Duke of Richmond was a close friend of Col. Talbot. The Postal Authorities, because of duplication use the name "Bayham". In spite of this, the name "Richmond" still persists.

During the War of 1812-14, bodies of American troops raided the district burning and destroying property. Just one such body came as far as Richmond. A General with 1500 men came up the Thames to the Grand River but, for fear of the Brantford Indians, turned south and returned to Detroit - via Talbot Road crossing the Otter River at Richmond.

In 1819 a store and tannery were built. By 1837 these had increased to three stores, two tanneries and two hotels. Here a veteran of the Battle of Queenston Heights and his family, arrived in 1816. This Mr. Caleb Cook, wife and two children, came on one horse. The steep Otter hills discouraged the beast and it died. They must have had a kind of axe because Evergreen boughs were cut for protection for the night and in the morning they began the work of building a log cabin in Richmond. Tradition has it that James Gibbons who did not actually take part in the Battle of Queenston Heights, arrived (after a night of travel on horseback) in time to help bury the dead who were killed in battle. Four great grandsons of James Gibbons are at present living on four adjoining farms about two miles from Richmond. These four men are Geo. G. A. Procunier, Frank Procunier, Fred Procunier and Neil H. McConkey. Frank Procunier's farm is the land that his grandmother, Elizabeth Gibbons (Procunier) inherited from her father, James Gibbons.

In the early days travel around Richmond was somewhat terrifying - when our pioneer ancestors wished to drive down the hill on Talbot Road, they cut down a tree and fastened it to the back of the wagon, to keep it from going before or overturning on the heads of the horses.

The first school was built about 1821, a church in 1850. Both were destroyed by fire and replaced by new buildings. The first village school-house stood in front of the Richmond West Cemetery. Later a school was built in the Village and the present modern school is the third one on this site, by the Church.

In the early days Richmond had a furniture factory (that also made coffins for the local trade) a general store, a shoemaker shop and a repair shop. About 90 years ago the furniture factory burned and 65 years ago the general store and shoemaker shop burned (set on fire by the old shoemaker whom the boys used to sober up under the pump.) Soon after, Henry and Ed. Woods built the present Laing property. (Three generations George, C. Lorne, and Charles Laing have been storekeepers and Postmasters in Richmond.

Around one hundred years ago, Talbot Road went straight east and down the hill to the bridge instead of around as it does today.

The Otter has dwindled with the passing of the lumbering industry but Richmond Village remains surrounded by the beauty of the hills.

RICHMOND as it used to be.

Early in the 18th century Richmond was a Village of no mean importance and its inhabitants expected it to become a Town. Its main street starting on the corner at Lorne Laings store boasted furniture factory which also made coffins for local trade, general store, shoemaker shop and repair shop.

About ninety years ago the furniture factory burned and about sixty-five years ago the general store and shoemaker shop burned, set on fire by the old shoemaker who the boys used to sober up under the pump. Soon after Henry and Ed. Woods built the building now occupied by Lorne Laing about one hundred years ago.

Talbot St. went straight East over the hill instead of around and over the hill Thomas Godwin kept a general store.

On the North side of Talbot St. the name of Laing as storekeeper was well known, West up on the hill Adam Pauling had a tailor shop and just west of that was a general store. Across the road from this store in the corner of Godwin's field was a blacksmith shop, another wagon and blacksmith shop was situated at the top of Mills Hill, still another in the centre of the Village. This shop was later moved across the road and some of us can well remember Geo. Mitchell the genial and good natured blacksmith. Just East of Mitchell's shop Mr. McGuire operated a tannery.

Three hotels held high carnival in those days and one boasted a dance hall reaching from hotel to barn, the dance floor above and horse sheds underneath. The last hotel quit selling alcoholic beverages about forty years ago.

The Village schoolhouse once stood in front of Richmond West cemetery and is the third schoolhouse now on its present site.

About 1885 the cemetery was extended to the road. Dancy, Ault, Mann, Riddell and Hart were the names of the last five Dr.'s who practised in Richmond. At one time Baptists and Methofists united in Church services but about the middle of 18th century the Baptists build their Church west one and one-quarter miles and the union meeting house was left to the Methodists, which building burned a little more then 40 years ago and the Methodists built the present beautiful and comodious church.

In those early days lumbering was the chief industry and traces of some of the old rollways can be found where logs were rolled down to the Otter and rafted to Pt. Burwell but with the ~~otter~~ passing of the timber, the Otter like the Village dwindled in size.

Some are reforesting but reforest as they may the Otter will never again so nobly fill its banks..

No Village can be independant of the community so will mention some of the nearby industrys. A little west of the cemetery a road went North to the Forge road or No.3 highway as it is now and down the hill on the Jerry Creek and on the Jerry Moore property was a wollen mill and grist mill operated by the Moore family. About a mile from the heart of the Village toward Corinth was a flour and grist mill operated by George Procunier later sold to Robert Knott, saw mill, wollen mill, foundry and store and to this busy little cluster the name of Wilsonburg was attached.

Gone are those busy pioneering days. Are we sorry?.

The presence of an old Indian graveyard ( east of the Robert Kennedy House) bears testimony to the prehistoric popularity of the original Ridge Rd. Trail. Indeed Maple Grove was much more populous in its infancy than later--- perhaps because of the adjacent Big and Little Otter mills. Pioneer school rolls are said to have registered some seventy pupils. Evidence of early cabin sites have been found in quite unexpected spots---one such was reported down the Mitchell lane leading to the Big Otter. On our way home from school we always knew a home had once existed back of every fence corner where grew "graveyard moss", a lilac clump, Scotch roses or what was evidently a planted cedar or tamarac shrub. At one of these sites, on Talbot street, we were told had lived the Mr. Thurston who had dubbed the first schoolhouse when building in the woods to be an "Owl Cage"--- a name which stuck for years.

An empty cottage used to stand where the Beatty road ran south from Talbot St. There was also a white cottage close by the old Daniel Franklin House (Fred Proconier's). Speaking of the Franklin's we are told on the best authority that the same Van Norman blood that runs in the Tillson veins ran also in the Franklin family.

Before William Chamberlain, Joel Chamberlain ( who married a Palmer) the father of William, lived on the farm called by their name. And before the Chamberlain's the land was owned by the Graham's. John Graham married Ursula High (daughter of the pioneer John High and his wife Lucy Hatch). The Graham couple moved to the States, both living to be very old, Mr. Graham dying at Grand Rapids, Mich.-- Mrs. Graham comparatively recently in California.

Lodor's Inn stood at the foot of the Roloson Hill about where was the home of the late William Roloson. This inn was doubtless one of the Talbot road stopping places when Levi Hatch Sr. carried the mail between St. Thomas and Long Point District.

East of the school where John Stewart later built his home was the domicile of the Papineau family, blood kin of the man by that name in Lower Canada history. The hill just east of John(now Harry) Stewart's still goes by the name of Billy's Gully after Billy Ketchabaw who lived in a part of the Papineau House.

The parents of the late Martin and Warren Kidd lived at one time it is said on the Wilson Kennedy place-- A pleasant white frame house with a long veranda used to stand behind the row of lovely maples where Fred Bowes now lives. It was the old Kennedy homestead. Angling opposite across the road to the south lived "Old Mrs. Cowan" and her son Andrew.

John Pygall(who married Sybil Caswell) at that time lived in what was the very neat, trim, white frame dwelling later occupied by Edwin Bowes, C. W. Lane, James Robertson, etc. Down a wild lane rambling along to the east beneath the Ridge from John Pygall's dwelt the Byelaws.(At least this is how we pronounced it. It probably had a more foreign spelling). At the end of this wandering lane in a then new, large white house lived first, Thomas Hatch, then Joseph Hatch and after these had moved from the community, James Bowes with his family of lively young people.

The house of Samuel Baldwin, on the corner of the concession and the sideroad running between Talbot street and the Sinden Mill hill is still intact, though renovated. But the home of John Wilson (who married Hester Bowes) north of Baldwin's on the same sideroad has long since vanished and with it its young people who used to enliven the neighbourhood.