

In 1949 a child was adopted or sponsored through the Unitarian Service Committee and again in 1958 through the Save Children Fund we sponsored a child. Layettes and other clothing have been donated to the Unitarian Service Committee.

AID TO THE SCHOOL

Through the years, until school section 14 became part of Southwold School Area No.1 and the pupils began attending the Central School across from the Elgin Manor 1964, the Middlemarch Women's Institute has helped the teacher and the pupils of the Middlemarch School in many ways. The Institute has donated the use of the hall, rent free, for Christmas Concerts and practices, and for Hallowe'en Parties. Treats have been bought for the end of the School picnics in June and for Christmas. The following things were also bought for the use of the teacher and pupils - a cot, blanket and a pillow, soap dispenser and soap, prizes for public speaking contests. In 1961, as requested a framed picture of Her Majesty the Queen Elizabeth to the school. Later the same year the Institute purchased a flag for the school.

In December 1964 as this was the transition period for the children from attending the little one room school, with its annual Christmas Concert to attending the large new school a Christmas party was given to the pupils of former SS #14. to take up for the lack of a Christmas party and concert. The children came directly from school on the bus and presented some musical numbers under the direction of Mrs. Ron Medlyn. They had supper and also a bag of treats. Little pre-school children and their mothers were entertained also. Members of the Middlemarch Institute assisted in serving refreshments at the formal opening of the new school.

MIDDLEMARCH INSTITUTE HALL

The Middlemarch Institute Hall, formerly the Grange Hall, has been important to the life of the community for meetings and for social events of all kinds. There have been Institute meetings teas and bazaars, home economics extension courses, 4H club meetings, card parties, dances elections, suppers, school Christmas Concerts, bridal showers, wedding receptions, junior farmers meetings,

private parties, and other meetings.

Naturally, it has taken a great deal of work and money to keep the building in good repair and add improvements to it.

In 1947 and again in 1961 the hall was redecorated.

In 1947 the members made new drapes for the windows and in 1964 they purchased custom made drapes and rods.

In 1956 a good used piano was purchased. As needed, stoves, both coal and wood heaters, for the main part of the hall, and cookstoves for the kitchen had been purchased or donated by generous friends. But in 1954 two oil burner space heater with fan was purchased, which made it a very convenient place to heat the building in cold weather in preparation for a meeting or other event.

In 1949 the kitchen was renovated with built-in cupboards, counter and sink.

Repairs to the roof, and chimney, doors etc. have been made as they were needed and insulbric siding was installed in 1951. With the aid of some husbands of the members, a fence was put up, and trees and shrubs planted. Gravel was put in the yard to improve parking facilities. In 1962 a new outhouse was erected.

In 1950 a dozen metal folding chairs were purchased. In 1959 four long plywood banquet tables were made for us by a carpenter and in 1965 we bought ten metal card tables. Partial sets of dishes have been donated from time to time but most of it was heavy earthenware. So in 1960 each member donated a china cup and saucer to use for serving coffee at meetings. In 1963 a set of dinner ware (service of 96) with a rose pattern was purchased. The old dishes were given to the Pearce Williams Christian Centre at Iona. In 1957 a set of stainless steel cutlery (service of 60) was bought. In 1964 a 90 cup electric coffee percolator was purchased.

When the new Maple Leaf flag was adopted as Canada's new national flag the Institute purchased one for the hall.

Programs and Extension Courses

Programs for our meetings have been on many subjects. We try to have at least on meeting a year devoted to each of the Standing Committee Conveners, namely Agriculture and Canadian Industries, Home Economics and Health: Citizenship Events; Culture and Hand Craft. Some programs have been prepared and given by our own members, some by a guest speaker or films. Some of the subjects dealt

with were various aspects of horticulture and gardening; films on cancer; Pre-Natal and Post-Natal Care of Infants; and other Health subjects, oven meals, herbs, salads, cake decorations, making of slip covers, rug making and other home economics subjects. Laws pertaining to women, the IODE travelogues, Canadian music; Canadian poets; Artists and their work; book reviews; creative writing; flower arranging; antique work; book reviews; creative writing; flower arranging; antique glass; fall fairs, fire preventions and current events. There have also been visits to local industries such as Pinecroft, Vio-^Din St. Thomas, Wonder Bakeries in London, fish hatchery at Sparta and others. We have had demonstrations by 4-H girls. Every year at the May meeting we have a sale of roots, bulbs, plants, etc. brought by the members from their own gardens. There have been Home Economics Extension Courses on a number of subjects. Some of these have been: Hospitality of Foods; The Bird Meal; 153 Pounds of Meat; Foods Healthy Children Like; Aids to Effective Speaking; Sew and Save Dollars and Make Sense; New Lamps for Old; Hooked Rugs and Millinery.

Resolutions

- | | |
|----------|--|
| 1946 | Letter to County Council urging co-operation with the Memorial Hospital Trust to relieve shortage of accommodation at the hospital. |
| May 1951 | Request for warning signal at C&O crossing. |
| Aug 1951 | Meeting of Institute members with C&O officials and Elgin Suburban Roads Commission at the crossing and it was agreed that a warning signal was needed. |
| 1953 | Mrs. A. Lyle met with the Roads Commission for re-improving Talbot Hill road and bridge. |
| 1958 | The City improved the section of the road from the bridge to the top of the hill after the letter we sent of protest; re-its condition. It was also urged that a traffic light be installed at the |

intersection with No. 4 highway but this was not done.

1965

We supported along with other organizations the establishment of a junior college in Elgin County.

Special Events

In the fall of 1945 and also 1946 the Middlemarch Women's Institute co-operated with the North Yarmouth Women's Institute in putting on a dance at the Masonic Auditorium, St. Thomas.

In 1946 Mrs. T. Dubber, mother of Harry Dubber was presented with a Red Cross pin in recognition of the great quantity of work she had done (Knitting and sewing).

Feb. 1947 was the fiftieth Anniversary of the founding of the Women's Institute. At that time there were 70,000 members in Canada. Mrs. J. R. Fitcher gave a talk at the West Elgin Winter Picnic on fifty years of Institute work and this was later heard as a delayed broadcast on radio.

In June 1947 there was the anniversary celebration in Guelph and some of the members travelled by special CNR coach to attend this event.

On May 20, 1947 the District Annual was held at Middlemarch. The meeting was held at the church and the luncheon, which was catered to by Middlemarch, Boxall and River Road, was held at the hall. Incidentally the price of the luncheon was 50¢ a plate. At this district annual meeting membership fees were increased from 25¢ to 50¢.

In November 1947 Mrs. J. R. Fitcher was elected president of the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario. Middlemarch Women's Institute co-operated with other Institutes of Elgin County in Honouring Mrs. Fitcher with a Banquet held at the Masonic Auditorium, St. Thomas. At this time, the Institute members of the county presented her with a silver tea service. In 1957 the sixtieth anniversary of the founding of the Women's Institutes, a life membership certificate and pin were presented to Mrs. Fitcher.

The year 1952 was Elgin County Centennial, and Middlemarch Women's Institute co-operated in the Elgin Centennial Spectacle or pageant. With other Institutes of Elgin County \$2000 was raised, the interest of which is given each year to the Junior Women's Institute members to further her

education. Our share of the mobey was raised by auctioning a quilt. The materials for the quilt were donated by Mrs. E. Horton, mother of Mrs. J. R. Fletcher.

In August 1953 the Associated Country Women of the world met in Toronto and some of our members attended.

In 1954 plans were started for the Elgin County pioneer museum. Our Institute assisted at an antique display at Andersons Ltd. in St. Thomas, in aid of the museum fund. Our members helped in other ways such as doing the actual painting of some of the rooms. The museum was opened in April 1957 and the new wing or annex in 1963. Middlemarch Women's Institute always assists at the annual tea and has supported the maintenance of the museum with donations. Members also contribute home made jam and jelly to be sold.

The year 1960 was important to rural Elgin County as the International Plowing Match took place here in that year. Our Institute members assisted at the Women's Institute booth where they served tea, and also helped to staff the museum exhibit. We contributed toward the Farmstead Improvement Competition. Middlemarch, along with other institutes and church groups catered to the Plowmen's Association banquet which brought the plowing match to a close. This involved a great deal of work, as dishes, tables, etc. had to be taken to the Arena and afterwards the dirty dishes were taken to Elgin Manor where we washed them.

Another event of 1960 was the erection of two provincial plaques by the Archaeological and historic sites Board, at the request of the Middlemarch Women's Institute. One of these plaques commemorated the important Talbot Road, an early colonization road. The second plaque was in front of the former Ralph farm (lot 41 South) and honoured Dr. John Ralph, one of the founders of the first medical school in Upper Canada, in St. Thomas in 1824.

In September 1956 the first president of the Middlemarch Women's Institute, Mrs. C. S. Butler, was presented with a life membership certificate and pin. In February 1965 the only other living charter members, Mrs. Alex Mc Niven and Miss Margaret Lyle, received their life memberships.

Late in October 1965, some members along with their husbands and families, journeyed to London one Saturday evening to participate in the

(8)

CFPL-TV program, Take Your Choice. The following week they were able to see themselves on the television screen!

Prepared By Mrs. H. Butler

Lenore Butler

ONTARIO DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
WOMEN'S INSTITUTE BRANCH AND
HOME ECONOMICS SERVICE

REPORT OF MEETINGS

This form to be filled in and sent to your DISTRICT SECRETARY immediately after the APRIL meeting.

INSTITUTE Middlesex DISTRICT West Elgin YEAR 48-49

MONTH	DATE	ATTENDANCE		PROGRAM FEATURE
		Members	Visitors	
May '48	13 th	20	30	Family Evening. Moving Pictures at W.I. Hall.
June	17 th	18	1	Report of Convention & a paper on "Herbs" - Recipes given.
July	8 th	15	35	Meeting & Picnic held at Port Stanley with members & families.
August . .	12 th	16	24	Mrs. Braine & Rep from Institute in England was present & gave an address.
Sept. . . .	9 th	11		Mrs. B. Langton gave an address on Modern Cooking giving recipes.
Oct.	14 th	19	1	Delegates appointed for London Convention. Current Events & Current
Nov.	10 th	21	4	Address by Dr. J. N. Howe O.B. Specialist on Pre-Natal Care & Feeding of Infants.
Dec. '48.	9 th	21	6	Xmas party. Exchange of Gifts. Dickens Xmas story.
Jan. '49.	13 th	13		Plans for a Winter-Picnic & Dinner at Hall. Paper on New Year's Customs.
Feb. '49.	10 th	19		Paper on "Rolf Estate" - 1 st Technical school in connection with St. Thomas & Dr. Rolf Hayes treats Technical School.
March '49.	10 th	14	28	Family night with Moving Pictures at W.I. Hall. "Lodwick's Light" & other Old Film shown.
April '48	8 th	21	Several	Annual meeting. State of officers read.
	12	208	129	

General Programs:

What was your outstanding program of the year and why do you consider it outstanding? (Please discuss this at a regular meeting.)

A paper given by Mrs H. A. Munro on the Dr. Rolf estate - a farm in our community. Dr. Rolf began the Medical School in St. Thomas Town and this started the Toronto University.

What were your principal subjects of study?

Household Science & Historical Research.

Did positive action result from any part of the year's program?

No doubt each member benefited a great deal from each meeting.

Co-operative Program:

What projects from the co-operative program has your Institute studied?

- (a) In the district Health Conference No. Participating
- (b) In the branch No. Participating

Were these courses successful? Give comments and constructive suggestions.

What follow-up work has been accomplished?

A talk by Dr J. H. Hare "Specialist in O.B. & Babies" on Pre-natal Care.

Standing Committees:

How were the standing committees incorporated into your program this year?

Each committee had charge of a program.

District:

How many members attended the District Annual? 5

In what district activities have you participated? Aiding the St. Thomas Area Elgin Hospitalization and repairing our Institute Hall's Grounds.

Conventions:

What value did your Institute receive from your Area Convention?

Reports given by Mrs Fatcher, by Miss Lewis and by Charlotte Whitton

What would you like featured at your next Area Convention?

An interest awakened in Rural Women in the Arts.

Community Interests:

In what community work did you participate during the year? List under the following headings:

Your School yes. (Parties for Children) Xmas tree

Community Health yes. Hospitalization

Cultural Activities (music, art, drama, libraries, etc.)

Films:

Recreation yes - boy's rink, St. Thomas Area, films school parties, family nights, Xmas party, Car parties

Social Service Hospitalization

Junior Homemaking Clubs and Junior Farmers' Association yes - assistance to both. We have Junior Girls' Clubs & Farmer's Association

Other Agricultural Activities (Agricultural Societies, Federation of Agriculture, etc.)

Federation of Agriculture
General and Miscellaneous Carrying for child, money to scholarship, Shepherd Fair gifts to girls leaving community, brides. The sick & bereaved are remembered and necessary parcels sent. Welcome to Dutch Family.

Membership:

How many new members have you enrolled this year? 2

Total Membership 30 Average Attendance 17

How many members are actively engaged in Agriculture? 25

What are your proposed plans for gaining additional members next year?

We are going to try to reach out further.

F.W.I.C.—How did you observe F.W.I.C. month?

Fees paid

A.C.W.W.—Did you have an International Day in your Institute?

Describe fees paid

Have you established a Letter Friendship? yes Comment Correspondence not to

break on the part of English Institute

General comments with constructive suggestions:

I think Women's Institute members should
begin to be more interested in the
cultural activities—music, art, drama
the reading of good books.

Our women do not read enough.
Rural women need to have something else
to talk about besides home-making,
cooking, sewing etc.

Secretary Mrs. W. G. Lyle

Address P.R. 1. St. Thomas

Date: April 14th '49

ONTARIO DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
WOMEN'S INSTITUTE BRANCH AND
HOME ECONOMICS SERVICE

REPORT OF MEETINGS

This form to be made out in duplicate, one copy to be retained for your BRANCH files and the other to be sent to your DISTRICT SECRETARY immediately after the BRANCH ANNUAL.

INSTITUTE Middlemarch DISTRICT W. Elgin YEAR 49-50

MONTH	DATE	ATTENDANCE		PROGRAMME FEATURE
		Members	Visitors	
April	12 14	12 14		Annual meeting & slate of officers
May	12	20	3	Officers of West Elgin were guests Demonstration on flower arrangement
June	9	14	1	Mrs. C. Rutchman gave talk on West Africa and Nigeria
July	14	13	12	Business meeting and picnic supper & sports.
August	11	9	1	Mrs. Fletcher gave talk on people places & facts.
Sept.	8	16	3	Planning improvements on our Hull kitchen
Oct.	13	12 22	4 5	Meeting at Pincroft and a demonstration on Pottery
Nov.	10	19	5	Demonstration on Rug making
Dec.	9	23	42	Entertaining new residents and pre school children with tree & Christmas Program
Jan.	12	18	1	Resume of half century
Feb.	9	19	5	Institute news. Round table discussion. New Hosp. plans.
March	9	14	5	Book review on "This New Canada"
	12	206	84	

General Programme:

What was your outstanding programme of the year and why do you consider it outstanding? (Please discuss this at a regular meeting.) *A meeting, convened by Canadian Industries. It was held at "Pinecroft" near Olympe. Pinecroft is a cabin in the pines, where a very thriving industry of pottery is conducted. By a demonstration was given and an exhibit of their wares.*

What were your principal subjects of study? *Economics*

Did positive action result from any part of the year's programme? *Yes. We undertook the remodeling of an old unhandy kitchen in our Institute Hall with very satisfactory results.*

Co-operative Programme:

What projects from the co-operative programme has your Institute studied?

(a) In the district *Pangu Mills.* No. Participating *12.*

(b) In the branch No. Participating.

Were these courses successful? Give comments and constructive suggestions *yes.*

What follow-up work has been accomplished?

Standing Committees:

How were the standing committees incorporated into your programme this year?

Each standing committee was responsible for a programme and they were all very entertaining and instructive.

District:

How many members attended the District Annual? *12.*

In what district activities have you participated? *The winter picnic at West Lorne for West Olympe.*

Conventions:

What value did your Institute receive from your Area Convention? *We heard instructive addresses from Dr. Hocking. Kate Gitten & splendid reports.*

How many from your Institute attended the Convention? *13.*

What would you like featured at your next Area Convention? *There were no suggestions all considering that possibly the dividing of our area might make its own problems for this year.*

Community Interests:

In what community work did you participate during the year? List under the following headings:

Your School *We have a school committee who assist at school picnics & concerts and they have bought a radio & record player for the school.*

Community Health *We have the school nurse & health unit.*

Cultural Activities (music, art, drama, libraries, etc.) *We have had a great many educational films.*

Recreation *We have parties every two weeks in the winter. Cuckoo is played with darning.*

Social Service *We have helped needy families in the community.*

Junior Homemaking Clubs and Junior Farmers' Association *Most of our girls have completed the 3 years garden club and the course. Being well dressed and well groomed.*

Other Agricultural Activities (Agricultural Societies, Federation of Agriculture, etc.) *Our President gave a radio broadcast on the Fed. of Agriculture programme.*

General and Miscellaneous *We would like cultural subjects studies with less cooking etc.*

Membership:

How many new members have you enrolled this year? 30

Total Membership 30 Average Attendance 17

How many members are actively engaged in Agriculture? 25

What are your proposed plans for gaining additional members next year? To approach every new resident of our community, and make our meetings entertaining.

F.W.I.C.—How did you observe F.W.I.C. month?

A.C.W.W.—Did you have an International Day in your Institute? We asked our members

Describe to individually pay their dues of "2" and 5". Mr. F. L. Thomas M.P.P. was to speak on

Have you established a Letter Friendship? International which country? with 2 other W.I. as our guests.

Comment relations.

Have you established a Friendship Link with a Women's Institute? yes

Which country? England Comment a different member writes each time and is answered by different members of the English W.I. at Much Hadham Hertfordshire.

GENERAL COMMENTS with constructive suggestions of the English W.I. at Much Hadham Hertfordshire.

We had a very successful Christmas meeting. We held it in our Hall and asked every mother and her children to come. Different members being responsible for this transportation. We had a true Christmas programme. Each member made herself responsible for a gift so that each child received a suitable gift from the tree. A committee passed around slips with the child's name & age at a previous meeting. Some members had 2 some 3.

Secretary Mrs. Stanley Lyle

Date: Mar. 30. 1950.

Address Box 53, St. Thomas

**ONTARIO DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
WOMEN'S INSTITUTE BRANCH AND
HOME ECONOMICS SERVICE**

REPORT OF MEETINGS

1950 — 1951

This form to be made out in duplicate, one copy to be retained for your BRANCH files and the other to be sent to your DISTRICT SECRETARY immediately after the BRANCH ANNUAL.

INSTITUTE Middlemac DISTRICT West Elgin YEAR 1950-51

MONTH	DATE	ATTENDANCE		PROGRAMME FEATURE
		Members	Visitors	
April . . .	13	17	2	Election of Officers - Election on Citizenship by Mrs George Thorne
May . . .	11	25	5	Paper on Canadian Artists and Illustrations by Mrs J. H. Ware. Convenes.
June . . .	6	18	19	Trip to Greenfield Village, Dearborn Mich Edison Institute Museum Henry Ford.
July . . .	13	12	11 children	Waterworks Park - Picnic - races contests and supper Mrs S. Macpherson Convenes
August . .	10	7	5 children	Paper on Citizenship by Miss K. H. Chambers "Can I do Good. Canadian"
Sept. . .	14	18	5 children	Home Economics meet on the theme demonstration of food book Mrs J. Macpherson Convenes
Oct. . .	12	18	5 children	Horticultural Convenes Mrs N. A. McLeod purchase of flower and plant seen on her trip West Victoria and N.S.
Nov. . .	16	18	4	London Convention - Speaker Mrs J. R. Dutcher - trip abroad. Well prepared to
Dec. . .	14	26	35 children 16	Pre school children and Mothers music - Santa - picture - book - gift children
Jan. . .	11	22	2 children	Agriculture Convenes - Mrs A. McPherson speaks Mrs Frank Carter: Soil and its relation to agriculture.
Feb. . .	8	15	19	Spice Market Convenes Mrs A. McPherson Dr J. H. Snell - illustrated plans of their home - from the Hospital
March . .	8	28	2	Canadian Industries Convenes Mrs. Life Bee trip to London Under Bakers sent and fruit of bread.
12 - 224 48-57 children				

General Programme:

What was your outstanding programme of the year and why do you consider it outstanding? (Please discuss this at a regular meeting.) *several travelogues by members making interesting trips*

What were your principal subjects of study? *Health*

Did positive action result from any part of the year's programme? *back from Dr. H. H. Smith on plans for new St. John's Elder General Hospital*

Co-operative Programme:

What projects from the co-operative programme has your Institute studied?

(a) In the district *Delbartville - Buoyten You Home with Colour.* No. Participating *14*

(b) In the branch *Good This Healthy Children like* No. Participating *15 all total*

Were these courses successful? Give comments and constructive suggestions

(a) *a good turn out at time of year it was appreciated house cleaning and useful for redecorating etc.*

(b) *time of film - not so interesting - but Miss Bradford was very good, and enjoyed film*

What follow-up work has been accomplished? *Why 2 money doesn't eat*

Standing Committees:

How were the standing committees incorporated into your programme this year?

Each standing committee was in charge of a programme. These were all interesting and enjoyed by all

District:

How many members attended the District Annual? *Six*

In what district activities have you participated? *Winter Picnic at Delbartville* 19

Conventions:

What value did your Institute receive from your Area Convention?

How many from your Institute attended the Convention? *Six*

What would you like featured at your next Area Convention?

Community Interests:

In what community work did you participate during the year? List under the following headings:

Your School *We have a school committee of 3 - who assist at picnic Halloween party - concert -*

Community Health *We have the school nurse and Health Unit*

Cultural Activities (music, art, drama, libraries, etc.) *Dramatic night with Mrs. J. P. Stutcher showing her pictures of "Albion" with me - which were very educational*

Recreation *We have had Excursion parties every 2 weeks. Lend and square dancing after for old and young*

Social Service *purchasing a cook stove for a needy family - donation of clothing furniture etc. of old fire*

Junior Homemaking Clubs and Junior Farmers' Association *Our girls were adopted by Junior Institute for clothes closet up to date - Corden and assistant from our H. I. for Junior - Cereal Stief*

Other Agricultural Activities (Agricultural Societies, Federation of Agriculture, etc.) *Education of Agriculture*

General and Miscellaneous *Shedder House - Public speaking contest Unitarian picnic - book - bereaved - pre-school children and mother Christmas party and gift for each child*

Membership:

How many new members have you enrolled this year? 3

Total Membership 34 Average Attendance 18

How many members are actively engaged in Agriculture? 26

What are your proposed plans for gaining additional members next year? to pass our new Brochure to friends who we receive them

F.W.I.C.—How did you observe F.W.I.C. month? each member paying

A.C.W.W.—Did you have an International Day in your Institute? the dues for H. W. I. C. - a. c. W. W.

Describe paper on soils and their relation to Agriculture

Have you established a Letter Friendship? yes which country? U.S.A. Colorado

Comment

Have you established a Friendship Link with a Women's Institute? yes

Which country? England Comment a different member write each letter from each Institute. Much Haddon

GENERAL COMMENTS with constructive suggestions that fresh air England

Successful Handly night with Pot Luck dinner for Community and Mrs J. R. Dutcher showing her picture "Abroad with me". every one enjoyed them

Secretary Mrs J. C. Egan Carter

Date: March 31 - 1951

Address R.R. 1 St. Thomas