



Charter Members at the Dinner Which Celebrated the 50th Anniversary of the Founding of the Women's Institutes at Stoney Creek, Ont., February 19, 1947.

Standing, left to right: Mrs. H. P. Van Wagner; Mrs. McKinley Morden; Mrs. G. D. Conant, daughter of the first president; Mrs. B. E. Thompson; Mrs. George Millen, and Mrs. Murray Neil. Sitting, left to right: Mrs. J. B. Smith; Mrs. John Budge; Mrs. J. B. Davis; Mrs. George Gliddon; Mrs. Selby Corman, and Mrs. Walter Ptolemy.

FRIDAY, APRIL 21, 1972

FWIO's 75th anniversary marked by Elgin branches

It is 75 years since the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario came into being, and the anniversary was marked in happy fashion by Elgin County WI's, last evening, when members from all points in the county gathered in the Grace United Church to view the numerous displays and enjoy the program.

A highlight of the evening was the cutting of the huge anniversary cake, and this pleasant ceremony was performed by Mrs. Keith Heiple, chairman of the rally committee.

It was an evening of fellowship and reminiscence, as speakers recalled how Erland Lee and Adelaide Hoodless laid the groundwork for what was to become a world-wide wing of the WI took place at Stoney Creek, Ontario, and the FWIO have purchased the homes of Mrs. Hoodless and Mrs. Lee as lasting tributes to their memory.

Displays depicting the history of Elgin WI's and the areas which they represent were inspected by the many who attended the event. A great deal of work went into these displays, with most of them containing precious memorabilia whose history is entwined with that of the community they represent.

Rev. L. J. Coates, pastor of Grace Church, welcomed the assemblage and told how he had admired and respected

their accomplishments and helping to build good citizens.

"The WI is something to be admired," he said. "This year it is 75 years young. We really need what the WI stands for in these times, for it is always so alert and alive."

Greetings from the Provincial Board were brought by Mrs. Lorne Daniels, FWIO Board director, and from London Area by Mrs. Wallace Laidlaw, second vice-president of the area.

A. V. Langton, Elgin County's representative for the Ontario Department of Agriculture and Food, conveyed his good wishes and those of his department. He introduced Elgin's new home economist, Miss Lois Ferguson, who arrived in St. Thomas on Thursday, to begin her duties. She extended good wishes on behalf of Mrs. D. G. Marcou, who has been acting home economist.

A paper, prepared by Mrs. J. Robinson Fulcher, titled A Few Highlights of My WI Experiences, was read by Mrs. Herb Jackson, who also presented highlights of Elgin County Rally. The history of East Elgin was given by Mrs. J. Gowan Young, and that of West Elgin by Mrs. Vermont Pow.

A skit, The Women's Institute Story, was much enjoyed, and its presentation was given by Mrs. Roy McNeil and Mrs. Young.



A LABOR OF LOVE — The display arranged by Middlesmarch WI, traced not only the history of the branch, but of the community as well. Mrs. Robert Lyle puts a few finishing touches to the exhibit, which included items beloved by members of the community, and which are silent reminders of days gone by. (T.-J. Photo).

Singsongs, led by Mrs. Max Alton, with Mrs. E. McCurdy at the piano, were enjoyably participated in by all present, and other segments of the program which were a source of entertainment were the Dutton Highland Dancers, a ballet dance group, and the latest in fashions.

The 75th anniversary song was sung to conclude this part of the evening, and following

this, a candlelighting ceremony was conducted, with Mrs. George Corneil as soloist.

Another highlight of the evening was the presentation of the 1972 Elgin WI Centennial Scholarship of \$100 to Miss Kathy Martin, RR 8, St. Thom-

as, to further her studies at the University of Guelph.



ARRANGING DISPLAY — Highlights of the marking of the 75th anniversary of the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario by Elgin County WI's, were the many displays depicting the history of the various branches and the communities which they represent. Here, Mrs. Edward Johnston, display convener (left) and Mrs. Earl Morden, convener of education and cultural affairs, look over the display which they arranged for their branch, the Clachan Women's Institute. (—J. Photo).

Mrs. Harold Butler Elected West Elgin WI President

IONA (Staff) — Mrs. Harold Butler, RR 1, St. Thomas, was elected president of West Elgin District Women's Institute at the 60th district annual meeting of the organization, held yesterday in the Christian Fellowship Church, Iona.

The meeting was highlighted by the presentation of comprehensive reports, given by the standing committee conveners and representatives of various organizations.

Mrs. Herbert Jackson presided for the meeting, and she was assisted by Mrs. Ray Johnson, secretary - treasurer. In her address, Mrs. Jackson referred to the historic church in which the meeting was held. She also spoke of the many areas in which West Elgin Women's Institutes have aided: Elgin Manor, the Bobier Nursing Home, the Elgin County Pioneer Museum, the Cancer Society, the War Memorial Children's Hospital in London, and the St. Thomas - Elgin Association for the Mentally Retarded.

In her public relations report, Mrs. Lloyd Healy told of the many activities in which the branches engaged during the past 12 months. These included activities which ranged from selling centennial envelopes and making quilts, to holding teas, clearing cemeteries and making a centennial dress which was later donated to the museum.

Mrs. Gowan Young, F.W.I.O. board member, presided for the election of officers, after the nominating committee's report was presented by Mrs. William McKillop.

1968-69 OFFICERS

Serving with Mrs. Butler on the executive are: past president, Mrs. Herbert Jackson, Fingal; first vice-president, Mrs. T. E. Silcox, Shedden; second vice - president,

Mrs. Gordon Gow, Dutton; secretary treasurer, Mrs. Ray Johnson, 14 Margaret Street, St. Thomas; assistant secretary treasurer, Mrs. Russell Campbell, RR 1, Iona Station; federation representative, Mrs. Jackson; alternate to the federation representative, Mrs. Herbert Parks, RR 3, Shedden; district delegate, Mrs. J. D. Fraser, Dutton; alternate district delegate, Mrs. William McKillop, RR 3, Dutton; public relations officer, Mrs. Lloyd Healy, RR 1, Fingal.

Representative to the Museum Committee of the County Council, and curator of Tweedsmuir History, Mrs. J. D. Galbraith, RR 4, Iona Station; auditor for 1969, Mrs. Tyrell Begg, RR 1, St. Thomas, Mrs. Robert Allan, RR 1, Port Stanley.

Standing committee conveners are: home economics and health, Mrs. W. Liepmann, West Lorne; historical research and current events, Mrs. Parks; resolutions, Mrs. Kenneth Butler, RR 1, St. Thomas; agriculture and Canadian industries, Mrs. John McCart, RR 1, Southwold Station; citizenship and education, Mrs. William M. Meek, RR 7, St. Thomas.

Other Officers: representative to the Federation of Agriculture, Mrs. A. D. McTavish, RR 2, Dutton; alternate to the representative to the Federation of Agriculture, Mrs. Marion Campbell, RR 1, Iona Station; nominating committee, 1969, Aldborough, Mrs. Charles Cooper, West Lorne; Southwold, Mrs. Curtis Campbell, RR 5, St. Thomas; Dunwich, Mrs. William McKillop, RR 3, Dutton; representative to the Farm Safety Council, Mrs. John Smith, RR 4, Iona Station; alternate, Mrs. Harold Carroll, RR 5, St. Thomas; representative for Junior Institute, Miss Linda Gosnell, RR 1, Iona Station.

Mrs. G. P. Cornell of Dutton sang a solo during the impressive memorial service. She was accompanied by Mrs. James Bennett, who was pianist for the day. The entire group sang The Hymn of All Nations.

London Area chairman; A. V. Langton, Elgin agricultural representative; Mrs. Charles Phillips, East Elgin president; Mrs. Fred Shelton, Woodstock, South Oxford president; Mrs. Gertrude Holmes, Elgin County president.

and the address of welcome by Mrs. E. Lazenby, president of the Iona W.I., the host group. Mrs. A. Mc-

Callum, Iona Station, invited the West Elgin Institute to hold their district annual in Iona Station next year.

Among those giving reports were Mrs. Kent Griffin, for the Elgin-St. Thomas Tuberculosis Association, regarding the recent multiple survey held in Elgin and St. Thomas; Mrs. Vermont Pow for the White Cross; Mrs. D. A. Saunders for the Cancer Society and Elgin Manor, and Mrs. Charles Oldham for the St. Thomas-Elgin Association for the Mentally Retarded.

Mrs. Oldham told in detail of the work being done by the association to aid the district's retarded children, and spoke of the residence which is a projected activity presently. She said the association is keenly interested in learning of homes where there are retarded so that parents and children alike can be helped.

The work being done by the employees at Friendco Workshop was described by Mrs. Oldham, who told too of the nursery and school program.

BRING GREETINGS

Greetings were brought by Mrs. Harry Strang, Exeter,

During the afternoon sessions, Mrs. Young addressed the members in her capacity as F.W.I.O. board member, and told of her activities. Mrs. D. G. Marcon, home economist for Elgin, spoke of the various facets of her work and paid tribute to the W.I. members for their interest in 4-H Homemaking Clubs, and in the several short courses which have been taken.

Reports were given by Mrs. Liepmann, for home economics and health; Mrs. Meek, citizenship and education; Mrs. McCart, agriculture and Canadian industry; Mrs. Alex Turner, historical research and current events; Mrs. Kenneth Butler, resolutions; Mrs. McTavish, federation of food and agriculture; Mrs. Galbraith, Tweedsmuir history, and Mrs. Harold Carroll, home safety.

The opening prayer was given by Rev. Robert V. McCrea, pastor of the church,

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NEW EXECUTIVE—At their 60th district annual meeting, held yesterday in Iona, members of the West Elgin Women's Institute elected their 1968-69 executive. Taking office were (left to right) Mrs. Lloyd Healy, RR 1, Fingal, public relations officer; Mrs.

J. D. Fraser, Dutton, district delegate; Mrs. Herbert Jackson, Fingal, federation representative and past president; Mrs. Gordon Gow, Dutton, second vice-president; Mrs. Harold Butler, RR 1, St. Thomas, president; Mrs. Ray Johnson, St. Thomas, secretary-treasurer.—(T.-J. Photo)

1968



HONORED GUESTS — Past presidents and secretary-treasurers of West Elgin Women's Institute were honored yesterday when the organization held its 60th district annual meeting in Iona. Mrs. J. Robinson Futcher, a past district president and past president of the Federated Women's

Institute of Ontario, cut the anniversary cake. Past officers present were (left to right) Mrs. Futcher, Mrs. Charles Cooper, Miss Margaret Lyle, Mrs. Roy McNeil, Mrs. E. S. Down, Mrs. Neil Nickleson, Mrs. George Silcox, Mrs. J. D. Galbraith, Mrs. Herbert Parks, Mrs. Vermont Pow and Mrs. Morley Blewett.—(T.-J. Photo)

Cruel giant leaves path of debris

Like a spoiled child, the storm smashed houses; a church, cars and anything in its way.

By Alison Uncles
The London Free Press

From the air it appears a cruel giant has played hopscotch across London-area fields and farms Tuesday, squashing them in his wake.

He has come down hard on the first square — Komoka's Community Church — where the structure is chopped off at its knees and debris is whipped as far as two fields away.

About 30 car rooftops twinkle in after-storm sunlight near the church Wednesday, where the gruelling task of clearing away the rubble is under way.

Across the street, a damaged house leans on its foundations and surveys the scene with drooping window eyes.

BANDAGED ROOFS: In Frome, shattered roofs lie bandaged in tarpaulins. Police have blocked off traffic where the stormy giant swept his hand along the Frome section of Highway 3.

Like a toy train ravaged by an

angry younger sister, a truck balances on its side, flipped in the driveway of a torn house; trees lie snapped in two like matchsticks or uprooted like weeds; a back-yard pool languishes, murky with debris, and everywhere, ministry of transportation teams work to haul away trees and clear the street.

Along the devastated stretch, a farmer works in a barn packed with hay, visible from the sky because the barn's roof lies in a nearby field.

Just down from the ravaged row, a church graveyard lies unscathed, every stone upright, untouched by the unfriendly giant.

SPINNING SILO: Near Port Stanley, the giant has spun a red-and-white-striped silo cover into a neighboring field and blown the roof off a Highway 4 gasoline station.

Near Fingal, a boat once sheltered in a barn now sits amid a pile of splintered wood.

At Anderson Farms south of St. Thomas, fences are tipped over like dominoes.

Hopscotch, tops, toy trains and dominoes: the giant has reached Port Stanley, and has had his fun. New condominiums on the shore shimmer in the sun Wednesday, untouched by the storm, and Lake Erie is calm.

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Southwold council asks the province to declare the south Elgin County township — including the devastated community of Frome — a disaster area and provide relief aid.



Neighbors across the region pulled together Wednesday to help get life back to normal in the wake of Tuesday's brutal storm.

This aerial view looking east along Highway 3 at Frome in Elgin County shows the destruction left by Tuesday's storm, which destroyed or damaged all of the community's 20 homes, leaving residents to patch torn roofs with tarpaulins Wednesday and begin clearing away the rubble.

Peterson backs Southwold call for help

Township officials have asked for aid under the Ontario Disaster Relief Assistance Program.

By Jeff Brooke
St. Thomas Bureau
and news services

The first official call for provincial help has gone out from Southwestern Ontario in the wake of Tuesday's tornadoes.

At an emergency meeting Wednesday night at Fingal, Southwold Township council asked the Ontario government to declare the Elgin County township, which includes the devastated community of Frome, a disaster area.

The call was answered quickly by Premier David Peterson, who surveyed the damage to Frome while campaigning in this area Wednesday night.

Peterson, responding to township council's request, said he would recommend to cabinet that it provide financial aid to the area.

"I will recommend to cabinet that they support the (declaration) 3-1," Peterson said. "So for every dollar raised, we'll throw in three."

DAMAGE COSTLY: Township and provincial officials at the meeting agreed the repair of damage (no estimate was available) was beyond the ability of an individual or the municipality to pay.

"This is the old neighbor spirit," Reeve Hugh Lyle said.

Paul Burton, a spokesman for the province's municipal affairs ministry in Toronto, said at the meeting the provincial cabinet will consider the request next week.

If cabinet approves the measure, victims of the twisters, which may have hit 300 km/h, would be in line to receive money under the Ontario Disaster Relief Assistance Program.

Under the program — set up after the tornado that devastated Barrie in 1987 — the province pays up to three times what affected municipalities raise in relief money. The fund is only for homeowners and small businessmen whose insurance doesn't completely cover damages.

If everything goes smoothly, residents could be getting money from the provincial fund within two months, Burton said.

The map shows communities hit hard by Tuesday's storm, which spawned tornadoes in Middlesex and Elgin Counties. Southwold Township has asked the provincial government to declare it a disaster area.



The London Free Press



George Blumson/The London Free Press

Ed Donkers, of RR 3 Shelden, hauls the remains of the trees that shaded his Frome property before Tuesday's vicious storm left them in pieces.

Twister victims begin cleanup chore

Members of a community church plan to rebuild, but it will take years to get new fruit trees producing.

By Jeff Brooke and Jane Sims
The London Free Press

FROME — It was rural co-operation at its finest Wednesday as this Elgin County community on Highway 3 rebounded from the pounding it took Tuesday afternoon.

A tornado shattered at least half of the community's 20 homes. The rest were dented and torn by falling trees and flying debris. "I think people here are just grateful no one was killed," resident Susan Silcox said Wednesday as chainsaws buzzed, tractors roared and people sifted through the contents of their broken homes.

In all, 50 homes were seriously damaged or destroyed in Elgin.

NO POWER: The cost of the damage is not known and power may not be returned until Friday, said St. Thomas OPP Constable Art Manninger.

Silcox's future house was one of the Frome casualties. The twister lifted the half-built home off its foundation and moved it into the front yard.

Silcox and her husband were to move into their first house in November. They plan to rebuild.

FINGAL

In this community south of Frome, Harry Inthout remembered how he and two others took refuge in a shallow ditch.

"All this stuff, boards and fences, started coming at us. These four seagulls went by me about 400 miles per hour... we (lay) in the ditch and put our heads down."

Inthout, of Delaware, was clearing

land on property owned by the Andersons, thoroughbred horse breeders. Four of their 100 horses were seriously injured when a barn blew apart, said farm spokesman Steve Gilbert.

PORT STANLEY

The apple and pear harvest came unexpectedly early at Frank Turville's orchard.

The wind shook the fruit to the ground and snapped hundreds of his 4,500 fruit trees.

"I can do with losing this year's harvest," he said. "It's the trees though. That's the bad part. They're gone forever. It takes 10 or 15 years to get new trees into production."

Turville was injured when flying wood pierced his arm.

KOMOKA

They searched through the broken

bricks and mortar Wednesday at Komoka Community Church for anything they could save.

"It's not as bad as we thought it might have been," said Dave McNamara, a church trustee. "I think we can keep the basement."

The 10-year-old church was levelled in the storm, but members are ready to rebuild.

Parts of the church were scattered across a neighbor's field and some hymn books and chairs were found in a gravel pit two kilometres south.

McNamara said 10 churches in London, Komoka and Delaware have offered the congregation use of their buildings for Sunday worship.

"There were a lot of tears (Tuesday)," when congregation members came to inspect the damage, McNamara said. "We hope to rebuild. That's our intention."



George Blumson/The London Free Press

Those helping in the mammoth task of cleaning up the rubble at Frome in Elgin County, were served lunch at the home of Vern and Marie Hutchings by members of the Shelden United Church.

On Middlesex County Road 14, Bob and Shirley McDougall left the ruins of their home of 25 years Wednesday.

A piece of the roof served as a step to the front door as friends and family helped carry their belongings to a moving van.

"They've come from everywhere," Shirley said. "The people have been great."

Their 1986-model car was crushed under a cedar tree.

"We just paid it off on Monday," Shirley said.

The couple are moving to a rented house in Glencoe. In the meantime, their son's employer in Strathroy has lent them a mobile home.

Behind the McDougall home, tobacco workers worked to salvage part of the harvest.

Kilns filled with sticks of drying leaves lay scattered over the fields.

Sieglinde and Joaquim Gabriel lost six kilns of tobacco.

"We're trying to salvage two," Sieglinde said.

TORNADOES

"We were due for something like (Tuesday)," says Phil McLaughlin of the London weather office.

Historically: Tornadoes hit Southwestern Ontario every five years, and it has been six years since one hit London in the White Oaks area.

Losses: Damage might have been worse if not for the sparsity of buildings between Port Stanley and Strathroy where four twisters touched down Tuesday.

Power: Twisters that hit Komoka and Frome had a force of 200 to 300 km/h. On the Fujita scale (like the Richter scale for earthquakes), they would rank between F2 and F3. The strongest are F5, the weakest F0.