

## Early History Studied by W.I.

### Hear Story of Talbotville General Store and Payne's Mills

The Talbotville and Payne's Mills Women's Institute met at the home of Mrs. E. C. Gilbert, with Mrs. Harold Clark presiding. The roll call was answered by naming a country and its emblem. It was decided to send the cards the Institute had received to the Sick Children's Hospital in London, Ont. The next meeting will be the annual family night with the program in charge of the president and her committee and the social committee. Mrs. Kelly, Mrs. E. C. Gilbert and Mrs. Appleford were appointed a nominating committee.

It was decided to make "Tweedsmuir Village History Books."

Mrs. Clark then gave the meeting over to the convener of historical research.

Mrs. Colin McCallum read a splendid paper on the early history of the general store. It was built by J. Stacey in 1858. A great deal of teaming was done then between London and Port Stanley. "Five Stakes" lay about halfway between them and a stop-over night was quite necessary. The nights were not always peaceful, the Indians too soon learned to like the "hot stuff" they they could so easily obtain at the Stakes. Mr. Stacey was a man of great refinement and Mrs. Stacey was a chaperone for the young ladies of the village, said the speaker.

Mrs. Daniel Palmer gave a piano solo which was very much enjoyed. Mrs. Ross Berdan gave a fine paper on the early history of Payne's Mills, telling of the building of the mills by her grandfather, F. Payne, and H. Payne, also the Sells family. At one time Payne's Mills was a very busy place, but the first mills were burned and never rebuilt. The speaker also told of the early settlers, the Gilberts, Berdans, Knights, Sells and Wades. She spoke briefly of the prices of butter, eggs and meat in the early days as compared with present day prices and her paper was very interesting and instructive. Mrs. W. Ramey was pianist for the afternoon.

The hostess and her assistants, Mrs. H. French, Mrs. R. Turner, Mrs. Colin McCallum, Mrs. W. Ramey and Mrs. Goold, served a Valentine tea. The next meeting will be family night in Payne's Mills Hall on the third Thursday of March.

## Elgin County Pioneer Museum

(Continued from page 26)  
finances are modest as yet, but they are adequate and indicative of a healthy, widespread interest.

Income for 1958 included a grant from the county for \$500; a grant, for its work in 1957, from the Ontario department of education for \$868; maintenance of the grounds by the city; and admission fees of \$734.

In addition, there were donations from interested citizens and former residents of the community and also income from other important sources of revenue. One form the continued active support of the Women's Institutes has taken is the making of jams, jellies and pickles which are sold at the museum, these popular home-made products bringing a revenue of \$171 during the past year. Rag rugs brought in \$20; Books on historical interest concerning the county realized over \$58 and hastenotes with a sketch of the museum brought in over \$35.

There was some expense in connection with some of these things but the net proceeds were substantial.

**TEA IS AVAILABLE** every week day afternoon in the sunny dining room and that realized a further sum, while a series of teas and food sales held by the various branches of the WI during a week in June attracted many visitors and netted over \$200. All of these extras contributed considerably to the interest of the museum also. A brochure with a brief history of the old home was prepared early and is available free, but voluntary donations for these were over \$36 during the year.

It is a spacious old home, but already not large enough for its present purpose and the committee has many plans for it. It is hoped that before too long a log building may be erected in the garden, where exhibits may be shown also. It is planned, too, to set up a Col. Talbot Room, devoted to

articles definitely connected with the founder of the settlement, the Hon. Thomas Talbot. There are many enthusiastic ideas for continued development.

**THE PURPOSE** of the museum is to preserve the history of the community in a tangible way, to serve as a tribute to the past and an inspiration for the present and the future. That no one interested may be excluded, its charge is small, twenty-five cents for adults, fifteen for students, no charge for young children with their parents, and no charge for groups of young students or of children with a leader. A one dollar membership fee admits the holder without other charge for a year. The museum is open afternoon and evening every week day and on Sunday afternoons.

Although their museum has unique features, the Elgin County Women's Institute is not unique in this type of project. Other Institutes in Canada and other organizations have founded local museums, but the experience of the Elgin County women can be added now to the record of successful ones and encouragement for any who might be considering such an undertaking.

It is a project that involves much planning, much work, unforeseen as well as expected problems, encouragement and assistance from many quarters and the development of an absorbing interest that seems without limit in its scope. Also a rewarding sense of achievement.

## ENJOYED SOCIAL EVENING

### Talbotville-Payne's Mills Women's Institute Stage Fine Program.

The February meeting of the Talbotville-Payne's Mills Women's Institute took the form of a social evening when the members entertained their families in the Community Hall, Payne's Mill, on Friday evening. A delicious supper was served in the basement of the hall to one hundred and eleven people. A short musical program followed with J. McCormick as chairman. Selections were given by W. Graham, Ted and John Calcott, Jean and Billie Knight, Mr. and Mrs. E. Gilbert. The music was interspersed with remarks from Messrs. Bennett, Calcott, Woolley and Clark, and Mr. McCormick told several witty stories. The remainder of the evening was spent in games which were conducted by the program committee under the convenership of Mrs. F. Graham. A contest, "Play Ball," afforded much merriment. Progressive euchre and croquinoles were then played. Ralph Auckland received first prize for euchre and Archie Abbott for croquinoles, while the consolation prizes fell to Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Abbott. Everyone voted a very enjoyable time and appeared loathe to leave when the evening was ended. The March meeting will be held at the home of Mrs. F. Knight on March 19.



*Mrs. R. J. Fletcher, President of the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario, presents W. R. Reek, President of the Ontario Agricultural College, with a cheque for \$19,000, the Adelaide Hoodless Fund raised by the Institutes for scholarships in the four-year Home Economics course to be opened at Macdonald Institute this fall.*

## Provincial Leaders Honored by Women's Institute



—Photo by Stollery.



1947  
Mrs. Gordon Conant with a portrait of her mother, Mrs. E. D. Smith, president of the first Women's Institute. The flowers were Senator Smith's tribute to the Institute on its fiftieth anniversary.

# **GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY AT STONEY CREEK 1947.**



1947.  
The oldest living past president, Mrs. Hamilton Lee lighted the candles on the birthday cake.



1947.  
Charter members of Stoney Creek Institute. From left to right: Standing: Mrs. H. P. VanWagner, Mrs. McKinley Morden, Mrs. G. D. Conant representing her mother Mrs. E. D. Smith, Mrs. E. B. Thompson, Mrs. George W. Millen, Mrs. Murray Neil. Sitting: Mrs. J. B. Smith, Mrs. John Budge, Mrs. J. B. Davis, Mrs. George Glidden, Mrs. Selby Cornan, Mrs. Walter Ptolemy.



1947  
Miss Edith Collins and Mrs. A. E. Walker who are compiling a history of the Women's Institutes.



1947  
Miss Anna P. Lewis, Superintendent of the Ontario Institutes, Mrs. Hugh Summers, Provincial President, Mrs. Gordon Conant, Mrs. Angus Jackson, President of Stoney Creek Institute.