

Bayham WI Has Two Living Charter Members

The Bayham Women's Institute was organized in the home of Mrs. A. B. Riddell in the village of Richmond in the summer of 1907 by the East Elgin District officers; president Dr. Anna Backus, and first vice-president, Mrs. D. D. Finch, Mapleton. The officers elected that day included Mrs. Riddell as president with Miss Addie Cook as secretary - treasurer. There are two living charter members, Mrs. H. L. Godwin who is still quite active in Institute work and Mrs. Odber McGregor, Aylmer, who is still a member, but owing to ill health is confined to her home most of the time.

During these 57 years there has always been a variety in the programs.—talks by members on different subjects and also guest speakers from other places, demonstrations, debates, short courses, and entertaining other neighboring institutes. During World War I the members were busy, knitting, sewing for Red Cross, packing boxes, also making donations of money to all the different reliefs from the overseas countries asking for them. After the war was over the members purchased a plot in the Richmond West Cemetery and had a Memorial Monument erected in memory of the 12 boys from this community who did not return and have held a Decoration Day service every summer since around this plot which is always decorated with summer flowers and flags. We also help with the upkeep of this cemetery.

The members have always tried to live up to the motto—For Home and Country.

During the depression years, the W.I. helped the shut-ins, needy families, with food and clothing, quilts, and other articles, also any family burned out. In fact this has been practiced all down through the years.

In 1939 World War II, the members continued Red Cross work which included 2000 articles made and several ditty bags sent to the armed forces. A large sum of money was given to the Red Cross Central Fund to be used for the boys overseas as they saw fit. During these four years we made a total of 6,704 pounds of jam. As the boys returned home social evenings were held for them and they were presented with leather billfolds and belts.

The W.I. is interested in short courses and the co-operative programs as set up by the Department. In 1947 two active members were

given life membership certificates and pins, namely — Mrs. George Orton and Mrs. Lorne Laing and in 1953 Mrs. H. L. Godwin and Mrs. Geo. A. Procunier were made life members. The above mentioned members were also charter members at that time. In 1949 Mrs. Ward Benner brought honor to the Institute by being elected a provincial board member, which office she held for three years. The members presented her with an Ontario Board Member Badge.

SUBSTANTIAL DONATIONS
Substantial donations have been made during the last few years to the St. Thomas Elgin General Hospital; The Elgin County Pioneer Museum; The Aylmer Arena; Friendship school at St. Thomas and The Westmount school for Retarded Children at Tillsonburg; United Welfare Services, and to local community work.

For a number of years the W.I. has corresponded with a Friendship Branch of the Merstham Women's Institute in Surrey, England, and each Christmas gifts are exchanged. For the last 25 years annual bus trips are enjoyed every summer and the members have toured a number of factories and plants and went sightseeing in many different places in Ontario and the United States. Members also attended the 50th anniversary of the Institutes of Ontario held at the O.A.C. Guelph and in 1953 a number of members attended the A.C.C.W. convention held at the Maple Leaf Gardens in Toronto. The above is just a few of the many nice things enjoyed during the past years.

When the 50th anniversary was celebrated in 1957 Mrs. Von Brown and her sister Mrs. William Berdan were made life members. Guests from all the neighboring Institutes were entertained. In 1962 a 10 year-old girl in the Caribbean Christian School for the Deaf, in Spur Tree, Jamaica, West Indies was adopted. Besides paying \$60. per year the members corresponded with her and send presents at Christmas.

The same loyal support will be given in the future as in the past to the Provincial F.W.I.O.; Dominion F.W.I.C. and to the Associated Country Women of the World A.C.W.W. projects which include Adelaide Hoodless Home, Scholarship Fund, Pennies for Friendship, and community projects.

During the 57 years money has been made by donations,

teas, suppers, auction sales, social evenings, bingos, penny sales, card parties, banquets, catering to weddings, quiltings, mystery parcels, tickets sold on different articles donated by members, food sales, plant seed and bulb sales, birthday boxes and appearing on a tv show and many other different ways.

The highest membership was in 1956-57 when there were 92 members. Life members—Mrs. Godwin, Mrs. Von Brown, and Mrs. William Berdan.

The executive is past president, Mrs. Fred James; president, Mrs. Stuart Miners; first vice-president, Mrs. Percy Jibson; second vice-president, Mrs. Isadore Volkeart; secretary - treasurer, Mrs. G. N. Roloson; assistant secretary - treasurer, Mrs. Lewis Thurston.

Bayham holds evening meetings

The Bayham Women's Institute (WI) had a very successful year under the leadership of President Mrs. Allan Cross. Mrs. Percy Jibson is secretary.

Meetings are held in the evening, the third Thursday of each month. Two other branches were entertained during the year and Bayham WI was invited to meet with Eden WI to share an informative report of the FWI national convention held at University of Prince Edward Island, Charlottetown.

Guests during the year were, Mrs. Ruth Marcou, acting home economist for Elgin County, and East Elgin District Women's Institute president, Miss Catherine McDowell. A teacher from the school in the community, demonstrated macrame and a Fanshawe instructor, spoke on the Art of Quilting. A Bayham member gave an interesting paper at the annual Grandmother's meeting, How Grandmother Coped With Waste In Her Day.

The highlight of the year's programs, was the annual dinner meeting and two other WI branches were invited to share a conducted tour of the new Provincial Police College in Aylmer.

A display of antique fruit bowls and compotes was set up at the local fair, and help was given at the museum and Elgin



MRS. BARBARA CROSS

Manor Tuck Shop. The shut-ins of the community are remembered at Christmas.

During the year the group also had a Penny Sale, Mystery parcels and a plant and food auction.



Bayham W.I. display at Aylmer fair

English Guest At Bayham

Mrs. Arnold Stansell was hostess at her home for the Bayham Women's Institute on Tuesday afternoon. The president Mrs. Percy Jibson presided. Roll call — "Name a vegetable and how it gets its name or your favorite vegetable." The annual donation to help with the upkeep of the Richmond (West) Cemetery was made. Mrs. Leonard Simpson gave the report of the District annual meeting she had attended at Springfield United Church last week. The thought for the month was read by Mrs. Frank Winters "Emily's Gift".

A poem re "Flowers of Hope" was read by Mrs. Leonard Simpson.

Piano solo "Dreams of Memories" was played by Mrs. James Fuller, who was also pianist for the day.

Mrs. Jibson introduced our special guest Mrs. Helen VanSickle from our friendship branch of the W.I. from the Merstham W.I. of Surrey, England, who we have corresponded with since World War 2. Mrs. VanSickle gave a nice talk on their work in Merstham and also answered a lot of questions by members. She was accompanied by her niece Mrs. Lloyd Van Bradt of Brntford. They were both thanked by Mrs. Jesse Van Patter and presented with a gift on behalf of the members.

Mrs. Harry McShane gave a very interesting reading entitled "My Autograph". She was also presented with a gift.

On the arrival of Mrs. Van Sickle and Mrs. Bradt at Richmond they were entertained at a noon luncheon at the home of Mrs. G. N. Roloson. Other guests present included the president, Mrs. Jibson, Mrs. Leonard Simpson and Mrs. Von Brown. Mrs. Roloson was assisted at the table by Mrs. Jibson, after luncheon they all journeyed on to the home of Mrs. Stansell.

A successful plant and bulb sale was held at close of program by Mrs. Ermina Bowes and Mrs. Isidore Volkaert. Lunch was served by Mrs. Ermina Bowes and her assistants.

The June meeting will be held in the Summers Corners United Church on Tuesday afternoon June 11th with Mrs. Jesse Van Patter, Mrs. Wray Miller and Mrs. Robert Learn as joint hostesses.

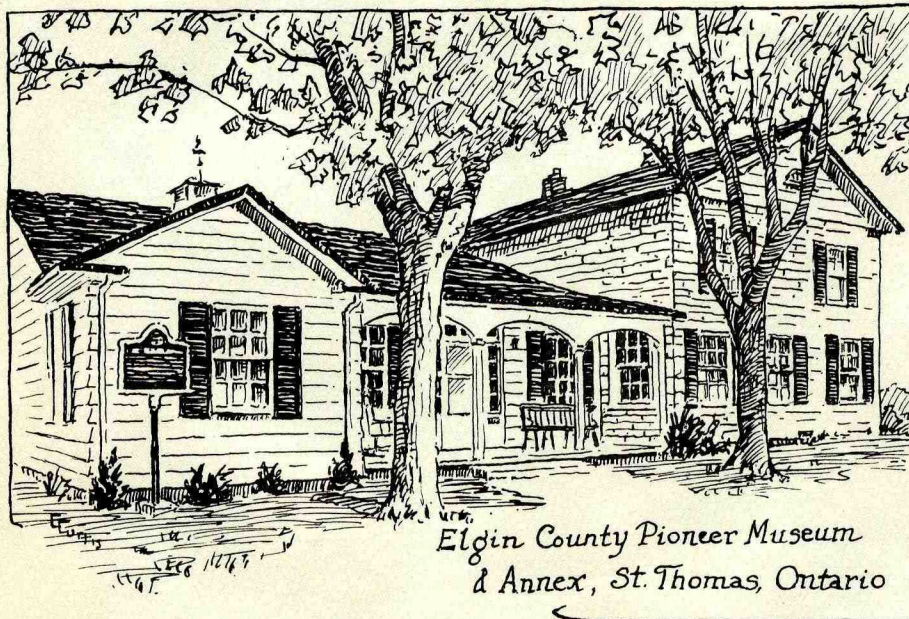
In regard to the July bus trip it has been decided to go on the bus trip with the East Elgin W.I. executive on or about July 18th. We will be giving further particulars in the near future.

An Aylmer Express photographer was on hand at the close of the meeting to take pictures.



Mrs. Helen Van Sickle of Merstham, Surrey, England, was a guest at last week's meeting of the Bayham Women's Institute when she presented an embroidered tea cloth to the Bayham W.I. for its 50th anniversary, the gift of the Merstham W.I. Shown left to right at the meeting held at the home of Mrs. Arnold Stansell, are from left to right, Mrs. Gordon Roloson, Richmond, secretary-treasurer of Bayham W.I.; Mrs. Van Sickle; Mrs. Percy Jibson, president of the Bayham W. I. and the hostess, Mrs. Stansell.

Photo by San-Tom Studio, Aylmer



Elgin County Pioneer Museum
& Annex, St. Thomas, Ontario

Bayham W.I. gave donations to The St. Thomas Museum.
Also helped and Donated to afternoon teas and bake sales.



Mrs Gordon Roloson Sec. Treas. Mrs Percy Gibson President
Bayham W.I. 60th Anniversary Nov. 14 1967



ANNIVERSARY — Bayham's Women's Institute recently celebrated its 75th anniversary by presenting Life Membership pins to three of its members. From left, Mrs. Ila Jibson, Mrs. Hope Stewart, and Mrs. Ida Morris, receive their pins from Mrs. Barbara Cross, president. (T.-J. Photo).

History researched

Bayham Women's Institute celebrates 75 years of community aid, service

Bayham Women's Institute was organized in 1907, but minutes are available from only 1917 on. Barbara Cross, president, compiled a history of the

WI from those records and presented it at 75th anniversary celebrations, recently.

Throughout the years, Mrs. Cross' research brought out, the

fact that service to the community and further afield was the prime aim of the members. Sick and needy in the community were aided, and much knit-

ting, sewing, and packing of baskets done for soldiers in both world wars.

Socials, always popular in earlier years, was one way to raise money, as well as bring community members together. One lunch much favored by the community and WI members consisted of 'weaners, baker's bread, small cakes, candy and tea.

During depression years, District President Mrs. Firby urged women not to let hard times make a difference about joining the WI as it meant only one-half cent per week.

Homemade jam was a big production during the war years. In 1945, due to the scarcity of sugar, it was, members decided, easier to purchase cases of factory jam, instead of making it.

Mrs. Cross noted the willingness of members to support the WI, whether catering to a small reception for a local wedding or preparing and serving a huge banquet for a large organization.

Through the years, bus and side trips have been taken, not only for entertainment but to provide a better knowledge of local and provincial industries. The Royal Winter Fair, Ice Capades, Dominion Glass Works, Libby's, Carnation Milk Plant, Imperial Leaf Tobacco and recently, the Ontario Police College have all been visited.

Still active members include Mrs. Bertha Orton Berdan, life member, who was secretary-treasurer 1922-23, and Mrs. Annie Crane Benner, also a life member, attending at that time.

Mrs. Ila Jibson, Mrs. Hope Stewart and Mrs. Ida Morris received Life Memberships at the event.



1977

Bayham Womens Institute members



Back Row Lela Carter Mildred Owen Elsie Acre Isabelle Hewbank Hope Stewart
Jean Simpson Barbara Cross Tina Empey Ethel Wheatley
middle Row Reta Jackson May VanPatter Ethel Marr Iva Gibson
front Row Donna Lossing (Iva Gibson daughter) Mrs L. Acre Erma Volkarat