



Graham Warwick - Mayor of West Elgin
brings greetings



In memoriam by Muriel Carroll, Leah
Skiffington. Muriel lit the candle, Leah
sang Amazing Grace and Jean Jamieson
gave a reading.



Norma McGill reading Muriel's poem.



Singing Trio - Sandra Payne, Nancy McGregor, Lois Carroll.

Crinan Women's Institute celebrates anniversary

Eighty-five years ago, on April 24, 1919, a meeting was held in the classroom of Argyle Presbyterian Church to organize the Crinan Women's Institute. A month later, on May 19, 1919, the first regular meeting was held at the home of Mrs. Neil McEachren, with Mrs. J.C. McMillan as president and Mrs. George Carroll as secretary-treasurer. Seventeen ladies were in attendance.

The institute held a special celebration marking the anniversary on April 21.

Through the years, the Crinan Women's Institute has taken an active role in the community.

During WW II, the members sent clothing, knitting, treats and supplies to servicemen and people in need. They made quilts which were donated to needy families. They enjoyed working together at short courses which were sponsored by the Department of Agriculture.

They have sponsored card parties, bake sales, dances, Halloween parties, silent auctions and more. The proceeds from which have been used to make donations to the Heart and Stroke Foundation, the Cancer Society, the Tyrconnell Heritage Society, the Daffodil Society, the Crinan Community Centre and many others.

Also, exhibits at the local fairs would be ticketed with the Crinan WI label while some of the local young ladies were sponsored in the Ambassador Queen contest by the Crinan Women's

CRINAN WOMEN'S INSTITUTE NEWS

Institute. In years past, they supported 4-H Clubs and the list goes on.

The Crinan Women's Institute of today met to celebrate the 85th anniversary of their organization.

After opening the program with the Institute Ode and the Mary Stewart Collect, the president, Nancy McGregor introduced the guests of the afternoon, Mary Veenstra, Pres. of Elgin WI, Graham Warwick, Mayor of West Elgin, Norma McMillan of the Daffodil Society, Leah Skiffington of Strathroy and WI members from neighbouring societies throughout Elgin West.

A moment of silence and a memorial was conducted by Muriel Carroll and Jean Jamieson, followed by the singing of "Amazing Grace," sung by Leah Skiffington.

West Elgin Mayor Graham Warwick brought greetings stating that the Institute has been an important part of the history of the Crinan community throughout the years.

He stressed that it is important to the future of West Elgin when citizen's groups such as the Institute strive to make a difference - for Home and Country.

Mary Veenstra also brought greetings on behalf of Elgin Women's Institute. She spoke of the role the institute had played since its beginning and wished

the members well in the future.

Norma McMillan was the guest speaker for the afternoon.

For more than 25 years, she has been associated closely with the groups of the area through her dedicated work with the Daffodil Society.

Having come from an early Crinan W.I. home, Norma recalled from incidents from her mother's earlier days in the institute. She spoke of the first meeting her mother had attended at Mrs. Neil McEachren's home and read some of the comments for the future that Mrs. Carroll had given at an early meeting.

Sharon Gilchrist thanked Norma for her interesting talk and presented her with a gift. Muriel Carroll had written a poem for the anniversary celebration. Her poem was read by Norma McGill. Leah sang for the gathering.

Lois Carroll, Sandra Payne and Nancy McGregor sang a song written in the 60s for a W.I. grandmother's meeting. Throughout the song, names of members, past and present were mentioned.

On display were the Tweedsmuir Books which have been carefully coordinated and compiled by Minnie Livingstone in more recent years.

President Nancy thanked all of those taking part in the program and those guests who had joined in the celebration of this memorable occasion.

She closed the afternoon with "An Old Irish Blessing."

INSTITUTE PARODY

Crinan's such a busy place, with meetings, suppers and the like
All the ladies pace so quickly; no one yet has gone on strike
Ea-ch member of our institute, is willing to help out
Time and effort endlessly; in answer to our every plea.

Chorus

Every year our clubs been answering all the call for charity
Never foils to meet the test; but still has time for hilarity
Our masquerade shows yearly; bout the clowns our club has got
Our card parties, and our dances; well attended not by chance.

These costumes, that we're wearing, we are modelling just for you
T-o show just what the lessons, from a good short course will do
We have found that our instructors, do not eat like me and you
We have learned to choose our fabrics; how to wash our girdle too.

Chorus

We have sung of all the doings that we've done throughout the year
Now we'd like to tell you something, of our officers so dear
They have worked so hard to please us and we're such an ornery bunch
And I'm sure they're always thankful, when they say its time for lunch.

There is Grace, our worthy president, who so graciously filled the chair
Wh-en no one else would give consent; to let their name stand there
Geordie now has served us well, two years of labour we can tell
She tried hard to get our hall, despite the obstocles great and small

Chorus

Mar-ion our secretary, is the finest and the best
She keeps books well balanced and neat ^{at} she in-forms all the rest
Mildred's there to fill her shoes if a holiday Grace would choose
Mildred's much more time at cheerin' at our local base ball doos

Chorus

Glad-ys is our expert pantemine; with her skits we're all agog
Geordie's help when she has time to spare from chasing some wild dog
Citizenship our Kathleen stresses; or she tells us of a trip
When she's not our kids score lady at McLarty's baseball strip

Minnie and Muriel are so busy, trying to plan our trip by bus
And decide to go to Sams or somewhere more refind for us
Jean takes interest in our club, when she's not in a hub-bub
Bout' some Star business at hand or driving round with Argyle Bank

With all these frivilous members it is well for us we're blessed
With the other ladies who can keep, an eye on all the rest
They are very influential as they show both me and you
That our motto "For Home and Country is the Thing For Us ToDo"



Norma McMillan - Guest Speaker



Volumes 1 and 2 of Crinan W.I.'s Tweedsmuir Books compiled by curator Minnie Livingstone were displayed. Crinan members helped.



Presentation to our speaker, Norma McMillan by Sharon Gilchrist.
Anniversary Cake at the right.



Leah Skittington (Soloist) Lois Carroll's granddaughter.

History of the Crinan Women's Institute

as compiled by Minnie Livingstone

on the 85th Anniversary

April 21, 2004

It is a great pleasure to write about some of the events in the history of the Crinan Women's Institute from its formation on April 24, 1919 to the present day. At a meeting held in the classroom of the Argyle Presbyterian Church on the above date, the Crinan Women's Institute was formed.

The first regular meeting was held at the home of Mrs. Neil McEachran on May 19, 1919 with seventeen ladies present. Mrs. John C. McMillan was president. Mrs. George Carroll was treasurer. Mrs. Sarah (McColl) McPherson later took her place.

Fifty people gathered at the Crinan Community Centre on April 21, 2004 to celebrate this event.

We have two volumes of Tweedsmuir History. These are being microfilmed at the Elgin County Archives - the films to be placed in West Lorne Library when completed. Anything of historical interest can be submitted to the curator.

The Women's Institute has many interesting mottoes and themes such as "One may give without loving, but none can love without giving"; "Keeping your hands busy is great therapy for your mind"; "When an idea comes into your head, put it to work, not to bed"; "Bring an old piece of jewellery that belonged to a member of your family;" "A famous woman you most admire and why."

Crinan Women's Institute sponsors card parties, bake sales, catering services, etc., the revenue from which has been used for the upkeep of the hall, donations to the Cancer Society, the Daffodil Auxillary, and many others.

Many events are sponsored by Women's Institute such as the Annual Cancer Tea. The Crinan W.I. has displays at the Rodney and Wallacetown Fairs.

We have visited many interesting places such as Hostas' Choice at Appin, Fun Shop for Seniors at Rodney, Audrey Merklinger's home on Aberdeen Line.

The main event was the Official Opening of the Crinan Community Centre on Sept. 6, 2003, completed by a Trillium Grant, numerous donations and local hand labour.



Crinan Women's Institute 85th
Anniversary Cake made and
decorated by Karen Carroll.
April 21, 2004.



CHARTER PRESIDENT MRS. J. C. McMILLAN

Story of Community Service

History of Crinan Women's Institute read at 50th anniversary meeting

The following is the history of Crinan Women's Institute as read at the recent 50th anniversary.

Like any rural community, Crinan has a long tradition of friendly co-operation from the earliest days of bees for quilting, spinning, sewing carpet rags and wool picking. But it first took organized form in the Red Cross work of the First World War. When this work ended, it seemed unfortunate to many members to lose the satisfaction of meeting and working together as an organized community group.

The formation of the Women's Institute was suggested by several women, and particularly advocated by Mrs. John C. McMillan, who was always keenly interested in Crinan community and became very enthusiastic about the Women's Institute movement.

At a meeting held in the classroom of Argyle Presbyterian Church the Crinan Women's Institute was organized on April 24th, 1919. The meeting was attended by three representatives from the district — Mrs. Whiting, District President for West Elgin, Mrs. G. A. McLevey, District Secretary, and Mrs. A. D. McGugan all of Rodney.

First Meeting

The first regular meeting was held at the home of Mrs. Neil McEachren on May 19th, 1919, with 17 ladies present. Mrs. John C. McMillan was the natural choice as president of the new society. She was later honoured by becoming president of West Lorne district in 1921. In 1922 she became president of Western Ontario Women's Institute.

The first Secretary-Treasurer was Mrs. Geo. Carroll, who was relieved on account of family duties during her term, by Miss Sara McColl, now Mrs. Basil McPherson of Rodney, followed by Mrs. Jas. Andrews. (A list of presidents and secretaries for the past 50 years follows this article).

In the course of the past 50 years the Institute has engaged in varied activities. The first money earned and contributed was spent for linen covers for the Communion Table at the Church — the old ones being used for bandages for the Red Cross. A baptismal bowl and coal-oil stove were also purchased for the church.

During Mrs. J. C. McMillan's presidency the present fence was built around Simpson's cemetery. In 1957 this fence was repaired by the Institute and repainted.

Education

The Institute has always been interested in education. Members have donated prizes for

pupils participating in public speaking contests, and at various meetings special speakers on education have been heard.

Like all Institutes the Crinan Institute features the study and demonstrations of Home Economics. In earlier years members entered competitions for thrift at the local fair which included canning and processing fruit and vegetables, meat and chicken, and a competition for the best article made from cotton sacks.

During the years classes have been given by instructors in sewing, millinery, nursing, mat making, cooking and interior decorating.

Once a year a meeting is devoted to historical research having papers on the topic and a display of antiques.

In January, 1955, an antique display and tea was held at the home of Mrs. M. B. McColl, with many West Elgin district members attending. Proceeds were sent to the Elgin Museum. Each year a donation is given to it and members help with bake sales and teas held at the Museum.

Each August the Grandmothers' meeting is held honouring all grandmothers of the community. An old time lunch is served consisting of foods of long ago — scones, crackers and cheese, gingerbread, marble cake or cookies, etc.

Tweedsmuir Book

The Tweedsmuir Book was started in 1947. It records history and many interesting facts of the community from the days of the early settlers 'til today.

In 1966, at the District Annual in Dutton, it won first prize in the contest for the area.

The Institute is deeply interested in the welfare and social life of the community. Needy families have been helped in various ways. During the Second World War years the W.I. was active in the Red Cross work. Activities included sewing, knitting, jam making and quilting. Twenty-two soldiers and one nurse from our district were remembered with boxes.

In recent years members have helped at the Tuck Shop in Elgin Manor, also at Beattie Haven. Donations have been given to the Cancer Society, United Welfare, War Memorial Hospital, Easter Seals, Muscular Dystrophy and Memorial Park at Port Glasgow.

For several years the W.I. sponsored bus trips to various places of interest — Belle Isle, Wallaceburg Glass and Brass factories, Shakespearean Festival, O. A. C. Guelph, Pincroft Pottery, Elgin Manor, Maple Leaf Gardens, Goderich and London Theatre. One winter the ladies spent many a lively evening at their Ho-Bo teas.

During Centennial Year the Institute was host to the West Elgin District Annual. Several members were dressed in costumes of 100 years ago.

Golden Weddings

Those celebrating Golden Weddings in the community are always remembered with a gift from the Institute. Each year Halloween parties are held. Numerous people have contributed generously with their time and talents to social functions. Special mention of Stuart McIntyre with his toe-tapping music can not be overlooked.

In June, 1965, a new era in education dawned when rural schools were closed in favour of area schools.

The Institute, feeling the need of a community centre, kept an alert eye on the auction sale of the schools. Prior to this raising funds was discussed and a community auction was held in McLarty's field adjoining the church grounds. People of the district and neighbouring towns were most generous and a sum of approximately \$550 was realized as a starting fund for a new hall.

In December, 1965, Union No. 3, Aldborough-Dunwich school was purchased at an auction for \$800. The piano was also bought. A hall committee was appointed consisting of one man from each former section and three Institute members.

Community Centre

In 1909 a sign "Crinan W.I. Community Centre" was put up over the front entrance. The W.I. has been fortunate in having such willing helpers in our men of the district in repairing and maintaining the hall and grounds. Many social functions are held in the form of card parties and dances, as well as meetings.

Today members are proud to say the hall is free of debt and we have a bank balance of over \$200 in the hall fund. They hope the enthusiasm of past years carries into the future and that the hall serves as a community centre for many years and that Institute members always bear in mind the motto: "For Home and Country".

Much credit for the success of the Institute is due to past officers as well as the present who are: President, Mrs. Geo. Jamieson, and secretary-treasurer, Mrs. Frank Dewitte. Two charter members are still active in our organization — Mrs. Geo. Carroll and Mrs. Jas. Andrews. They were remembered for their faithful service with gifts of jewellery on behalf of the Institute.

The following is the list of officers and dates they served:

1919-1924: Pres., Mrs. J. C. McMillan; sec.-treas., Mrs. Geo. Carroll, Miss Sara McColl, Mrs. Jas. Andrews.

1924 to 1936: Presidents: Mrs. Neil McEachren, Mrs. A. J. McMurchy, Mrs. Frank McLarty, Mrs. Geo. Carroll, Mrs. Jas. Andrews, Mrs. Walter Cadogan; sec.-treas.: Mrs. Stanley Haines, Miss Bessie Stalker, Mrs. Neil McEachren, Miss Georgina McCallum, Mrs. Geo. Carroll.

1936-1937: Pres., Mrs. A. J. McMurchy; sec.-treas.: Mrs. M. B. McColl.

1937-1939: Pres., Mrs. Henry Urquhart; sec.-treas., Mrs. Haines.

1939-1940: Pres., Mrs. John McEachren; sec.-treas., Mrs. Jas. Andrews.

1941-1942: Pres.: Mrs. Walter Cadogan; sec.-treas., Mrs. M. B. McColl.

1943-1945: Pres., Mrs. Neil McEachren; sec.-treas., Mrs. Henry Urquhart.

1945-1946: Pres., Mrs. Walter Cadogan; sec.-treas., Mrs. Donald McRae.

1946-1948: Pres., Mrs. Gertrude McAlpine; sec.-treas., Mrs. Donald McRae.

1948-1950: Pres., Mrs. John Carmichael; sec.-treas., Mrs. Donald McRae.

1950-1952: Pres., Mrs. Neil McEachren; sec.-treas., Mrs. Donald McRae.

1952-1953: Pres., Mrs. E. Dawson; sec.-treas., Donald McRae.

1953-1954: Pres., Mrs. D. McRae; sec.-treas., Mrs. S. McIntyre.

1954-1955: Pres., Mrs. Wm. Zoller; sec.-treas., Mrs. A. Carmichael.

1955-1957: Pres., Mrs. M. B. McColl; sec.-treas., Mrs. A. Carmichael.

1957-1958: Pres., Mrs. Doug McMurchy; sec.-treas., Mrs. Gilbert Livingstone.

1959-1960: Pres., Mrs. D. B. McCallum; sec.-treas., Mrs. Gilbert Livingstone.

1960-1961: Pres., Mrs. D. Livingstone; sec.-treas., Mrs. Gilbert Livingstone.

1961-1962: Pres., Mrs. D. Livingstone; sec.-treas., Mrs. John Carmichael.

1962-1963: Presidents: Mrs. M. B. McColl, Mrs. D. B. McCallum; sec.-treas., Mrs. John Carmichael.

1963-1964: Pres., Mrs. D. B. McCallum; sec.-treas., Mrs. John Carmichael.

1964-1965: Presidents: Mrs. W. G. McCallum, Mrs. Ken McAlpine; sec.-treas., Mrs. Harold Carroll.

1965-1966: Pres., Mrs. Ken McAlpine; sec.-treas., Mrs. Harold Carroll.

1966-1967: Pres., Mrs. John Carmichael; sec.-treas., Mrs. Harold Carroll.

1967-1968: Pres., Mrs. Geo. Jamieson; sec.-treas., Mrs. G. Livingstone.

1969-1970: Pres., Mrs. Geo. Jamieson; sec.-treas., Mrs. Frank Dewitte.



Cake cutting by all members



Frances McCallum, Marie Bell, Nancy McGregor
Sandra Payne, Minnie Livingstone, Kathleen McLarty
Jean Jamieson, Muriel Carroll, Lois Carroll
Pam Stewart.

Crinan W.I. 85th Anniversary 2004
Members present and adherents
Left to Right.

Seated - Muriel Carroll, Irene Johnston,
Kathleen McLarty, Frances McCallum.

2nd. Row - Sandra Payne, Jean Jamieson,
Nancy McGregor, Minnie Livingstone,
Norma McGill, Pam Stewart, Sharon
Gilchrist, Marie Bell.

Back Row - Mary Fluker, Grace
McGartland-Morrison, Lois Carroll.

Absent - Rose McMurchy, Joanne Beer,
Jean McRae, Annie Isobel Tait,
Anna McCallum, Audrey
Merklinger.





Nancy McGregor presenting Irene Johnston with a gift. Although Irene now lives in West Lorne she is still a Crinan W.I. member.

History Summary of
West Elgin
Daffodil Auxiliary Cancer Fund

About 1956 a local doctor's wife started driving cancer patients for treatment, doing home care duties and even helping financially. In due time, others came to her rescue with financial assistance – particularly the Women's Institute. Bear in mind that was a period prior to any government medical plans.

In 1967 the Daffodil Auxiliary applied for a charity number so receipts could be issued to individuals contributing to either the Welfare Fund or Cancer Fund.

For over 28 years a Quilting Group from the hamlet of Fingal has donated a special quilt for a draw to raise money for cancer patients.

An increasing number of people over the past 15 years have made memorial donations in lieu of flowers.

These two sources of funds have allowed caregivers to attend to the needs of local patients and make sizeable donations to local hospitals and Medical Centres.

Listed are some of the larger donations made by the Daffodil Auxiliary (Cancer) from 1990 on –

1990 – To St Thomas Elgin General Hospital, funds to make available the first Palliative Care Room for seriously ill patients and their family members.

1991 - To Four Counties Hospital, the same amount given to make the first Palliative Care Room there also. (A plaque is still on the door of that special room.)

1995 – Another donation to the St Thomas Elgin Hospital Radiology Department - for a Special Reclining Chair for ladies being tested for Breast Cancer.

1995 – To Four Counties Hospital towards the purchase of and Electric Bed.

1995 – To Camp Trillium to help children with cancer to attend a special Family Camp.

1997 – To the Building Project of the Bobier Villa Nursing Home.

1999 – To the Bobier Villa towards the purchase of a Mechanical Life.

2001 – To St Thomas Elgin General Hospital to purchase a Vital Signs Monitor.

2003 – To the Bobier Villa for a Special Release Mattress.

2003 – To the Building Project of Elgin Community Health Centre.

To my knowledge there is not another Registered Organization in Ontario or Canada that can raise funds for cancer and not be required to forward the funds to the Cancer Society.

N.B. – In April for many years you have purchased Daffodils and sponsored individuals participating in the “Great Ride”. Those funds are all forwarded to Toronto.

I am sure there is no one reading this report that has not contributed to the Daffodil Auxiliary Welfare.

Norma McMillan