

1950.

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HISTORY OF MIDDLEMARCH WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

In answer to your questionnaire regarding the history of our institute, I am submitting the following answers.

1. The exact date of organization of the Middlemarch W. I. was February 26, 1918.
2. The Middlemarch W. I. was organized by Mrs W. S. Whiting of Rodney, District President of Women's Institute.
3. The first officers were--President-Mrs Charles Butler.
Vice-President-Mrs E. E. Luton.
Secretary-treasurer-Mrs Noble Tufford.*Er,*

4. Outstanding accomplishments--

(a) Agricultural and Canadian Industries

Each year one meeting is devoted to this topic, papers, speakers and visits made, such as to AYLMER POTTERS WORKS.

(b) Citizenship and Education

In 1946 this was our year's special study, have had many outstanding speakers.

(c) Community Activities and Public Relations

1. Improved School grounds.
2. Started the teaching of music in our school many years ago.
3. In 1949 purchased a combination radio and record player for the school.
4. Sponsored Junior classes and courses in Home Economics and gardening.
5. Had a Railroad Corner made attractive.
6. Helped the Senior boys to build a rink.
7. Decorated our Community Hall and gravelled the approach to the hall.
8. In 1949 made a modern kitchen at our hall.
9. In World War I and II our work was mostly for Red Cross, in World War II made over 3000 lbs. jam for overseas.

*School rink under
Jerques McCall*

(d) Historical Research and Current Events.

In May, 1944 wrote first chapters of our Tweedsmuir Village History and read same at our Middlemarch Church service which has become an annual event.

During the year many papers on current events are given by different members.

(e) Home Economics and Health.

1. Made use of short courses, joining with other Institutes for these.
2. Institute contributions of \$1000 was pledged and given for St. Thomas Memorial Hospital in 1924, and in 1949 pledged another \$1000 for the new Elgin Memorial Hospital.
3. Make many contributions to cancer fund and T. B. work.

(f) Resolutions that have been implemented.

That a four year course in Home Economics be given at Guelph.

(Mrs. Alex.) Jessie Lyle
1950.

May 26 - 1946.

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THE MIDDLEMARCH WOMEN'S INSTITUTE.

"The farm and village women, who had for a number of years attended farmer's meetings when subjects of interest to women, as well as men, such as dairying, fruit growing, bee keeping and poultry raising, were under consideration, decided in 1897 to form a Women's Institute in which home-making and other problems of interest to women could be considered. They were encouraged and assisted by the late Mrs. Adelaide Hoodless of Hamilton, who did so much to secure proper recognition for home interests in the educational institutions of Ontario."

The first meeting was held in the afternoon of February 19, 1897, almost fifty years ago. The first President was Mrs. E. D. Smith and the meeting was held in the village of Stoney Creek, Wentworth County. The motto "For Home and Country" speaks for itself.

Our Middlemarch Branch of the Women's Institute was organized in February 1918 at the Grange Hall, now the Women's Institute Hall, following a course in Household Science given by Miss Grey of St. Thomas.

PROVINCIAL BOARD CELEBRATES SILVER ANNIVERSARY



First Row (left to right): Mrs. R. Ross, Mrs. E. A. Duke, Mrs. A. Manley, Mrs. C. Holmes (past president), Colonel T. L. Kennedy (Minister of Agriculture), Mrs. W. B. Leatherdale (secretary-treasurer), Mrs. N. J. White, Mrs. A. E. McNaughton, Mrs. R. Mortley.
Second Row: Mrs. G. G. Johnston, Mrs. H. Wicks, Mrs. J. T. McNiven, Mrs. R. Bush, Mrs. W. Keyes, Mrs. P. W. Merry, Mrs. R. J.

White, Mrs. W. A. Cowan, Mrs. L. Creasor, Mrs. F. R. Thornton, Mrs. P. Hamilton.

Third Row: Mrs. W. C. Caldwell, Mrs. F. E. Birdsall, Mrs. F. Barron, Mrs. J. R. Fletcher, Mrs. J. Keating, Mrs. L. W. Challand, Mrs. G. G. Maynard, Mrs. J. Reid, Mrs. H. Summers (newly-elected president), Mrs. Christianson, Miss Mary A. Clarke (superintendent).

The first President was Mrs. C. S. Butler, the Secretary Mrs. Noble Tufford. The first Great War was in progress and the work, as the work of today for the most part, was for war relief. Sewing and knitting was begun. Teas and food sales were held to raise money for different war purposes.

The following are the Presidents and Secretaries to date:

Presidents	Secretaries
Mrs. C.S. Butler	Mrs. Noble Tufford
Mrs. E.E. Luton	Miss Jessie Fatcher
Mrs. A.F. MacNiven	Miss Bertha King
Mrs. Wm. G. Lyle	Miss Bertha King
Mrs. C.P. Welter	Mrs. O. E. Lonsberry
Mrs. Alex. Lyle	Miss Margaret Lyle
Miss Margaret Lyle	Mrs. Wm. Lyle
Mrs. C.S. Butler	Miss Margaret Lyle
Mrs. Thos. Dubber	Miss Bertha King
Miss Margaret Lyle	"
Mrs. Ross Tufford	"
Mrs. A.F. MacNiven	"
Mrs. Tyrell Begg	"
Mrs. Lawrence Kruppe	"
Miss Meud Wardell	"
Miss Bertha King	Mrs. Wm. Lyle
Mrs. J. R. Fatcher	"
Mrs. Ross Tufford	Miss Nora Curtis
Mrs. S. Curtis	Mrs. Kenneth Butler
Mrs. Stanley Lyle	"
Mrs. Harry Dubber	Mrs. Harold Butler

Two of our members have been District Presidents Miss Margaret Lyle and Mrs. J.R. Fatcher. The latter is also a director on the Provincial Board.

later President of Ontario
 Mrs. Robert Dwyer - Mrs. Stanley Lyle
 Mrs. Alex. Lyle - Mrs. James Curtis
 Mrs. H. Dubber - Mrs. Richardson
 Mrs. Richardson

In this list of officers the following are deceased, Mrs. E.E. Laton, Mrs. C.P. Welter, Mrs. ~~Noble~~ Tufford, Miss Bertha King, also many members. We honor their memory.

The day of meeting, until 1921 was Wednesday, but was changed to Thursday. In May 1923 we pledged ourselves to give \$1,000. for a ward to be called "The Captain Roy Dubber Ward" in the St. Thomas Memorial Hospital and in May 1924 our final payment was made and for several years afterwards we paid for its upkeep.

Our Institute year starts in May. In April a meeting is held at which, a programme for the year's work is drafted. These are typed and presented to each member. Miss Maude Wardell and Mrs. Kenneth Butler have kindly given their time to this work.

Our members are divided into seven standing committees namely, Historical Research, Citizenship, Home Economics, Canadian Industries, Agriculture, Social Welfare and Publicity.

This year Citizenship is being taken as a year's study, and the Historical Research is responsible for the Tweedsmuir Village History.

Our aims have been to assist in all worthy undertakings, to assist local institutions and to

learn and develop modern methods of home making, and to generally create a friendly and hospitable atmosphere in our Community.

One of our community efforts has been the beautification of our school grounds. The grounds were landscaped, hedges and border planted and lawn seeded.

The Women's Institute introduced music in our school. For several years Mrs. Mac McCann was employed to teach singing and develop appreciation of music. Public Speaking was sponsored and First Aid Kits presented to the school. The Elgin Home of Industry was remembered with gifts for those in residence and a meeting was held there and the residents entertained.

In our effort to learn and develop modern methods of home making we took advantage of the many Short Courses made available by the Department, such as Refinishing of Furniture, Rearranging of Furniture, Meat Cookery, Sewing and several lectures.

Our Institute has sponsored a great many Home Maker's Courses for the junior girls whose leaders were: Nora Curtis, Mrs. Clarence Smoke, Mrs. Harry Dubber, Mrs. Kenneth Butler, Mrs. John McNiven and Mrs. Harold Butler. The present course is:

Our Institute also, has sponsored,
*the "Garden Brigade" for girls. The first
leader was Jenn Tufford; and last
year and this year Louise Lyle.

"The Club girl entertains" and the leaders are

Mrs. Harold Butler and Mrs. John MacNiven.

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To keep in touch with our young people and
keep alive our splendid Community spirit we
remember our pre-school age children at the
annual Christmas concert. Our young girls are
presented with a gift if they leave the Comm-
unity for a new field of work also they are
remembered when graduation day arrives.

We have a yearly picnic, sometimes at Port
Stanley, Pinafore Park, Waterworks Park and
when gasoline was rationed at a member's home.

Each Christmas anyone in the community who
is confined to their home or is ill are remembered
with fruit or flowers. Cards are sent to the
sick at all times and flowers during the summer
months.

In 1937 the Middlemarch Women's Institute
was presented with our Hall, a gift from the
remaining trustees of the Apple Grove Grange, a
farm organization that had served its purpose
well. This building was built in 1880 and has
withstood the years well. Dr. James Curtis
kindly donated a coat of paint and Mrs. E.E. Laton
donated dishes, cooking utensils and some furniture.

Mrs. Wm. Lyle donated a cook stove for the kitchen. Chairs and silverware were bought. Since then the Hall has been the scene of many happy occasions. Long will be remembered the fowl suppers, venison dinner, many teas including our 25th. Anniversary Tea as well as numerous card parties and dances that are held there every winter. The school Christmas concert is always held in the Hall, and we all hope that it will continue to function as a community centre. Now with World War No. 2 over extensive plans are being made for its renovation.

Our War Work is being dealt with in the Chapter "Our War Effort". An outstanding effort along this line was our jam making, 3,000 pounds being made for the 3 years and sent with the 1,000,000 pounds of the Women's Institute of Ontario to the children and sick of Great Britain. For this work as in many other projects our community was divided into three Groups. The East Group included the members from the top of Fingal Hill to Begg's Corner. The Middle Group was from Begg's Corner to Middlemarch while the west group included those from Middlemarch west. A convener was appointed for each group, whose task it was to call together several members, when the fruit

was ready locally or available elsewhere. These small groups would meet at a member's home, sometimes in the afternoon, and very often in the evening. One afternoon or evening's work would yield a box, forty eight pounds, of jam and often it was midnight before this task was finished. The jam was immediately packed in tin cans, twelve four pound cans in a wooden box. The cans were then labeled with our name, Middlemarch Women's Institute, kind of jam and our Secretary's name and address, and they were then delivered to the St. Thomas Fire Hall for further transportation. We will long remember the splendid cooperation and amusing incidents at these busy meetings.

It has been our custom to entertain neighboring Institute branches and they in turn have entertained our branch. Recently the River Road branch invited us to the Y.W.C.A. in St. Thomas and Lt. Col. Ian Cameron showed his splendid collection of slides of "Early days in St. Thomas." These friendly gatherings have done much to promote a fine community spirit.

It has been said that the Women's Institute is Ontario's gift to the world, because other



Wearing dresses made by themselves, girls of the Junior Homemaking Clubs of Elgin County attend their Achievement Day.

Middlemarch W.I. sponsored "Cottons Can Be Smart" Leaders--Mrs H. Butler & Louise Lyle
Girls in group shown in picture are--Robin Fitcher, Margaret Dubber, & Cathryn Lyle.

1947-48.

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province soon followed Ontario's example, and we now find the British Isles, Belgium and France and other countries have introduced the Women's Institutes with great benefit to the people. Ontario's Women's Institute plan of organization and methods of work is largely adopted. The success of the organization is due largely to the fact that it is representative of all classes, being non-partisan, non-sectarian, and without class distinction.

It is our hope that our community may always have a Women's Institute as a source of culture, entertainment and better living.

Mrs. Stanley Lyle

~~Lean~~ Lyle

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MEMBERS OF MIDDLEMARCH INSTITUTE

⁴³
1934-1944.

Mrs E. Bowlby	Mrs C. Smoke
Mrs C. S. Butler	Mrs A. Lyle
Mrs K. Butler, Sec. Treas.	Mrs Donald Begg
Mrs T. Begg	Mrs T. McKnight
Mrs S. Curtis.	Mrs G. Carroll
Miss Norah Curtis	Mrs E. Monteith
Mrs. J. R. Fitcher	Mrs Turnbull
Mrs. H. Dubber	Mrs F. Curtis
Miss Margaret Lyle	Miss C. Humphries
Mrs G. Lyle	Miss Bertha King
Mrs W. Lyle	Mrs Robert Dowler
Mrs. S. Lyle President	Mrs Mac Best
Mrs. A. McNiven	Mrs L. Begg
Mrs J. McNiven	Mrs F. Cron
Mrs R. Tufford.	Mrs N. Best
Miss Maud Wardell.	Mrs T. Dubber
Mrs T. Stinchcombe	Mrs Dazel Mrs Dazel
Mrs Westerhout.	Mrs G. McCaig.

We mourn the passing of two of our faithful members during the year.

Miss Clara Humphries.

Miss Bertha King.

New Members of Middlewarch Women's Institute 1944-45.

Mrs Ivan Lewis

Mrs Fred Underhill

Mrs Lloyd Fulton

Mrs Robie Fatcher.

MIDDLEMARCH WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

Introduction

This is the story of the Middlemarch Women's Institute during the period 1946-1967 inclusive. It includes a list of presidents and secretaries; gifts and donations; aid to the school; Middlemarch Institute Hall; programs and special Extension courses; Resolutions; Special Events.

Presidents

1946-1947 Mrs. H. Dubber
 1947-1948 Mrs. L. Begg
 1948-1949 Mrs. L. Begg
 1949-1950 Mrs. R. Dowler
 1950-1951 Mrs. R. Dowler
 1951-1952 Mrs. A. Lyle
 1952-1953 Mrs. A. Lyle
 1953-1954 Mrs. H. Dubber
 1954-1955 Mrs. J. McNiven
 1955-1956 Mrs. J. McNiven
 1956-1957 Mrs. J. Curtis
 1957-1958 Mrs. J. Curtis
 1958-1959 Mrs. K. Butler
 1959-1960 Mrs. K. Butler
 1960-1961 Mrs. H. Butler

 1961-1962 Mrs. H. Butler
 1962-1963 Mrs. Roy Inch
 1963-1964 Mrs. R. Inch
 1964-1965 Mrs. H. Butler
 1965-1966 Mrs. H. Butler
 1966-1967 Mrs. C. Wilcox

Secretaries

Mrs. H. Butler
 Mrs. Wm. G. Lyle
 Mrs. Wm. G. Lyle
 Mrs. J.S. Lyle
 Mrs. Jas. Curtis
 Mrs. P. Richardson
 Mrs. P. Richardson
 Mrs. P. Richardson
 Mrs. P. Richardson
 Mrs. H. Duff
 Mrs. H. Duff
 Mrs. H. Duff
 Miss M. Lyle
 Mrs. Wm. D. Lyle
 Mrs. Wm. D. Lyle
 Assistant Secretary
 Mrs. B. Lyle
 Mrs. N. Tufford
 Mrs. N. Tufford
 Mrs. N. Tufford
 Mrs. N. Tufford
 Mrs. H. Carroll
 Mrs. H. Carroll

Gifts and Donations

During the past twenty-one years, the Middlemarch Women's Institute has taken part in many projects, both locally and in co-operation with other organizations.

On the local level, the Institute has helped needy families from time to time. Members have collected cotton material for the Cancer Society. They have assisted at the Well-Baby Clinic at Shedden; Canvassed for the United Welfare Services; and did sewing for the St. Thomas General Hospital, and for the Children's Aid Society.

(2)

Since the formation for the new School area, the Middlemarch Women's Institute has sent flowers on the death of a member of the community.

We have put on euchre parties at the Ontario Hospital for the patients. Institute members have donated Christmas gifts for the Ontario Hospital patients. We have also supplied cookies for the annual Carnival at the Ontario Hospital.

The Institute also always presents the daughters of the Institute members with a gift when they reach their goal in furthering their education past high school and also when they get married.

Middlemarch Women's Institute have sponsored two residents at the Elgin Manor and sends them remembrances at Christmas, birthdays, and other occasions. Before the new Manor came into being, gifts were sent to the men's and women's sections of the Home. On two occasions a donation of a budgie bird and a cage were sent and much enjoyed by the old men. In 1953 Middlemarch, along with other Institutes of the county helped to buy a television for the Manor. The sick and shut-ins are always remembered at Christmas. Institute members celebrating their fortieth and fiftieth wedding anniversaries are always presented with a gift.

Annual donations are made to the War Memorial Children's Hospital in London and to the Shedden Fair.

In the years immediately after the 2nd world war, boxes of clothing and food were sent to England and to Scotland.

In 1946 a donation was made to the Hospital Aid for a floor polisher for the Nurses' Residence.

In 1947 a donation was made to the Arena Fund.

In 1950 Middlemarch Women's Institute furnished a ward in the St. Thomas Elgin General Hospital at a cost of \$1,000.

In 1958 a substantial donation was made to the Snell School of Nursing.

Donations have also been made to the following:

- (a) Friendship School for Retarded Children
- (b) Manitoba Flood Relief
- (c) Korea Fund for Handlooms and Sewing Machines
- (d) Hungarian Relief Fund
- (e) Hurricane Relief Fund
- (f) World Refugee Year Committee
- (g) The Red Cross
- (h) Federated Institutes of Ontario Fund to buy the Hoodless Home.
- (i) Set of Centennia Coffee Spoons for a draw in aid of West Elgin Cancer Gift Cupboard.