

TWEEDSMUIR

VILLAGE

HISTORY

NORTH YARMOUTH WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

North Yarmouth Women's Institute

Organized October 1930

Commenced compiling Tweedsmuir History

May 1951

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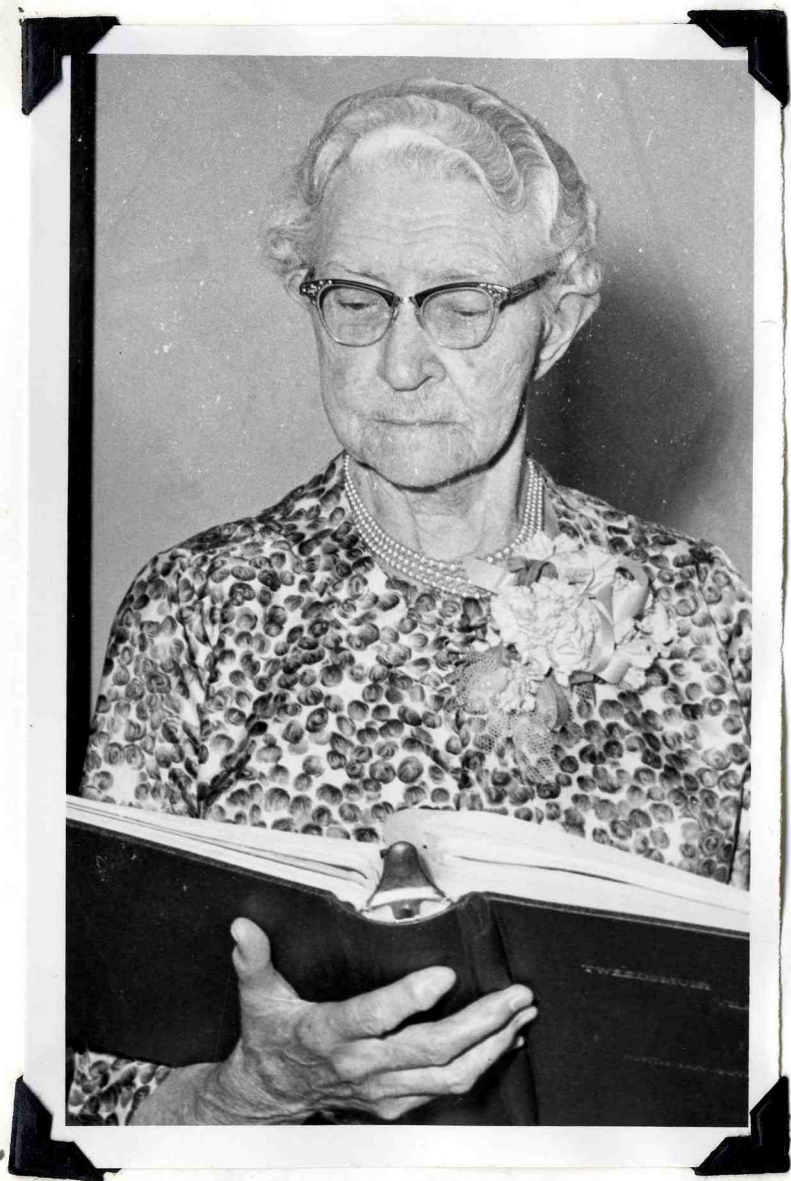
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HISTORY OF THE NORTH YARMOUTH WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

In the fall of 1930 a number of ladies met at the home of Mrs. John Van Patter to discuss the organization of a North Yarmouth Women's Institute and on October 17th, 1930, at the home of Mrs. Roy Baker the District Officers - Mrs. Chute and Mrs. Winder - organized the North Yarmouth Branch.

The following officers were elected: President - Mrs. Neil Curtis; 1st Vice-President - Mrs. John Van Patter; 2nd Vice-President - Mrs. Cyril Williams; Secretary-Treasurer - Mrs. Clarence Gloin; District Director - Mrs. Roy Baker; Branch Directors - Miss Ethel McIntyre; Mrs. Salathiel Curtis; Mrs. James Patterson; Pianist - Mrs. S. Curtis; Auditors - Mrs. Donald MacGregor, Mrs. Archie Ferguson. Programs for the year were planned at a meeting held at the home of Mrs. Neil Curtis.

The activities of the Women's Institute have been very numerous. Twenty bank books with an account of \$1.00 each were given to all new-born babies of members. First Aid Kits were purchased for the district schools. The piano in the "Glen" School was tuned. The beginning of the teaching of music in the schools was assisted by our Institute. Prizes were given to winners in the district Rural School Fairs; and also to the Music Festival held in St. Thomas. Pioneer cemeteries of the district were cleaned up. Christmas cheer to shut-ins and flowers for the sick and the bereaved were given. Relief work in the Community was undertaken. Clothing was sent to Northern Ontario. Donations were given to the War Memorial Children's Hospital, London, and the Children's Aid Society, St. Thomas, and numerous gifts to the Memorial Hospital, St. Thomas. We had a shower of articles to fill a hamper and sold tickets on the same and also a quilt and a travelling basket.

We served at Banquets. We sent four girls to the Junior Girls' Conference at the O.A.C., Guelph, and paid their expenses. Dramatics and Choral Work were studied at Alma College, St. Thomas, and a play given in McLaughlin Hall there and in St. James' Church, North Yarmouth, and entered a drama contest held in the Yarmouth Centre Church.

The following year a glove-making course was given at Alma College, for the members. Family parties were held at our homes and schools. Picnics were held at Port Stanley and Waterworks Park. A Special Course on Meats was taken, a Buymanship Course, Sewing Course and Re-finishing of Furniture, re-arranging of furniture and Parliamentary Procedure. Various other Institutes were entertained and a Summer Series of meetings were attended.

The Junior Homemaker's Club was started in 1939 and four of our members acted as leaders. The girls undertook several projects presented skits and displayed their work and one year won a trip to the C.N.E., Toronto, where they won highest honours in the Province for the best skit given. They also presented this skit at our London Area Women's Institute Convention. Later different girls acted as leaders of this lively organization showing keen interest in the work.

The years 1940-45 were very busy years with many things to mar our happiness. Many homes were saddened by the parting of sons and daughters going into Active Service and our newly-elected President passed away suddenly. Her loss was very keenly felt as she gave unstintingly of her time in Red Cross and Institute work.

Wartime activities included a Red Cross Garden Party in South Yarmouth where we assisted in Booths. Dances were held in the Masonic Temple, St. Thomas. Lunches were served to Active Service men in the Legion Hall, St. Thomas. The Institute catered to members of the R.C.A.F. who were donors at the Red Cross Blood Clinics. Many pounds of jam and honey were shipped overseas.

Our Institute catered at the large Banquet for Southwestern Ontario Day Plowmen, at the International Plowing Match held in October 1940, in the Pavilion Port Stanley.

This Branch has also given support to the County Oratorical Contests for Public Schools.

In 1944 a Hospitalization Group was formed.

After the Red Cross and war activities ended we relaxed for a short period, but not for long, as there were soon appeals for help in hospitals, homes, community chests, overseas parcels, for food and clothing, charitable institutions and many others, to which we generously responded.

In 1950 Mrs. Fatcher presented the branch with a bell from Stockholm, Sweden. This has been suitably engraved and used to call the meetings to order.

A silk flag was purchased and first presented January, 1952. In the same year two girls' sewing clubs were organized.

This Women's Institute also took an active part in the activities of the Elgin County Centennial, August, 1952; assisting in a booth, and tea at Anderson's Ltd., St. Thomas; The proceeds of which went to the Elgin County Women's Institute Scholarship Fund. The Elgin Institute raised over \$2,000 to establish this fund and will mark the Centennial in a permanent way for the Women's Institutes, the project being convened by Mrs. J. R. Fitcher, Middlemarch, past president of the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario. They also loaned old time costumes for the pageant and provided a float for the parade.

In October 1955, the North Yarmouth Women's Institute celebrated their twenty-fifth anniversary by publishing a cook book, and by this project contributed \$519.25 to the Elgin County Pioneer Museum.

Sanding floors-----	\$75.60	Plastering and painting--	\$115.00
Refinishing table-----	25.00	Covering chairs-----	30.00
Side board and buffet---	85.00	Back in cupboard-----	4.40
Moving-----	6.00	Rubber mat-----	8.25
Refinishing chairs-----	27.00	Corner brackets-----	3.00
Knobs on china cabinet---	2.00	Polisher-----	35.00
Drapes-----	57.76	Chairs-----	45.24

In March 1956, a walker which can be used with or without crutches, and has a folding seat for patient resting during the learning to walk period, also a wheel chair, the two pieces of equipment costing \$194.00, was presented to the Memorial Hospital, here in St. Thomas,

Then in 1958 we held a Valentine Tea, the proceeds \$100.00, was donated to the new Doctor Snell School of Nursing,

which is being built in connection with the St. Thomas Elgin General Hospital. We also contributed \$25.00 to the School for Retarded Children, which was opened in September 1958.

The North Yarmouth Women's Institute with a membership of 45, in 1966 contributed to many charitable organizations and activities; assisting at the Elgin County Home for the aged, the Blood clinics held in St. Thomas, also sewing, quilting and knitting at the Red Cross room there.

The meetings are held at the Y.W.C.A and the Elgin County Pioneer Museum, and contribute to their support.