



TYRCONNELL FISHERY FROM 1933

Mr. Douglas Walters started to operate the fishery at Tyrconnell in 1933, having bought it from Mr. Edward Koehler who closed the business here in 1928.

Each fishery owner paid a license of \$50.00 per net that they fished and this gave him the privilege of setting twine in 8 lots or a distance of approximately $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 3 miles.

The most distant net was about four miles off shore. The variety of fish caught was seasonal. Blue pickerel in spring, perch in July, white fish in the fall. Other varieties caught were yellow pickerel, a few herring and sturgeon. There was no limit to the number of boxes of fish that could be taken but each variety had to be a specified size - Sturgeon, 42" long.

The fishing was done by means of twine suspended from stakes which were driven about 8 ft. into the bottom of the lake. At first the tamarack stakes which had to be from 30 to 75 ft. long were obtained from Northern Michigan. Disease spread through this species of tree and killed them so stakes had to be obtained locally. When the local supply was exhausted Douglas Fir stakes were shipped from British Columbia. Twenty-five stakes were required for each pond net. They had to be hauled, peeled, and sharpened before using. Stakes were driven first by a steam engine mounted on a scow. This operated a 50 lb. hammer. Later, car motors supplied the power. In the fall the stakes had to be pulled and towed in and piled on land.

The lead of the net was 65 rods long and was about 3 ft. deep in the water. The fish came to this but they wouldn't swim through it so they swam along it to deeper water and were guided into the tunnel which was a large square the depth of the water at one end and narrowed at the other and lead the fish into the hearts and crib where they swam until they were removed.



A boat about 30 ft. long was used to lift the crib. Lifting was started about 7 o'clock in the morning. The crib was hauled up and the fish scooped out with dip nets into the boat and taken to shore. This lifting was done daily if weather permitted and the catch warranted it. In 1952 stakes were no longer used and trap nets were introduced. These were supported by metal buoys and kept down by means of stone, which were round pieces of cement about 10" in diameter and 2" thick with a piece of rope set in the centre to tie them to the twine.

When the fish were brought in to shore they had to be sorted into various species, weighed and packed in boxes. About 15 lb. of ice was placed in the bottom of the box and then 50 lb. of fish was added and then another layer of ice. The top was nailed on securely. The ice used for packing the fish was obtained at first from the lake or from ponds. It was packed in sawdust in the ice house. Before it could be used it was washed and crushed. When the lake was eroding the shore line very quickly Mr. Walters moved the fish house and twine house up the hill. A deep well was drilled and he was fortunate enough to get sufficient water to run an ice making machine which provided flake ice for the packing of the fish. At first, the fish were shipped to New York or Detroit from the station in Dutton. Each company had a local agent to buy for them and competition was keen so often a higher price was obtained. Sometimes the fish were sent on consignment. When the station closed, a Dunnville firm was given the franchise to pick up the fish. Each fishery was responsible for trucking the fish to the highway to meet the larger truck.

When yellow pickerel was deleted from the lake, New York was no longer a market for Mr. Walters. Omstead, from Wheatley, operated a processing plant and gathered up the fish and took them to the plant.

Nets had to be pulled and washed and mended three times a year. The washing was done at first by swishing them up and down in the water at the shore but later a pump which projected a stream of water of 150 lb. pressure was used. Nets were mended by a needle which made a knot similar to tatting.

The fishery was operated continuously except for the second war years when this area was used for target practice by the Air Force located at Fingal. The fishery was closed in 1966 as there were few of the good quality fish available because of the pollution of the lake. Much silt is dumped into Lake Erie in a year. Gradual filling makes the lake shallower and warmer. Lake water is used as a coolant in power plants and this also contributes to the warming. Atomic power plants use a great deal of water to cool the reactors. Some fish are attracted to the warmer water and die. Physical and chemical pollution consequences have been spectacular. The mayfly nymph was once the most abundant fish food organism inhabiting the bottom of the lake. These clean-water organisms have almost disappeared.

Pollution tolerant worms have increased greatly. Major changes have taken place in the fish population. The fish - cisco, whitefish that preferred clean water, have all but disappeared. The less desired but more tolerant species such as white bass, sheepshead, smelt, and carp are more abundant. As many as a 1000 boxes of smelt were fished from the lake in one day. Little or no market was available so they were dumped on the farmers' fields and ploughed under as fertilizer.

January 1958



West Elgin Girl Wins
County Oratorical Finals

Mary Brown, grade 8 student at Tyrconnell, won top honors in the oratorical county finals held here Saturday in the Department of Agriculture Board Room. The contest was sponsored by East Elgin and West Elgin Women's Institutes, through a grant given by the Ontario Trustees and Ratepayers' Association.

The benefits of insulin to diabetics, and the great change this drug has made in the treatment of sugar diabetes, was explained by the winner in her talk on the life and experiences of Sir Frederick Banting. Since its discovery, she pointed out, insulin has saved the lives of thousands of diabetes sufferers.

In February Miss Brown will go to Chatham to compete in the regional finals. First prize was a shield, with books going to the other contestants.



SCHOLARSHIP WINNER—Miss Elaine Pearce, of Wal-lacetown, (left) was presented with the Elgin County Women's Institute Centennial Scholarship during Saturday's 4-H Homemaking Achievement Day for West Elgin Clubs, held in West Elgin District High School, West Lorne. Mrs. Vermont Pow made the presentation. Here, Miss Pearce receives the congratulations of Miss Margaret Burrill, home economist for Elgin County.

June 7, 1961.

West Elgin Women's Institute District Annual Held in
Wallacetown Church 1972

Theme: "He who influences the times in which he lives has influenced all the times that come after - he has left his impression on eternity.

The 64th district annual meeting of West Elgin Women's Institutes was held in the Wallacetown United Church with Tyrconnell W.I. as hostess branch on Thursday, May 25th.

Following the opening of the meeting by the president Mrs. Gordon Gow, Mrs. Murray Barnet gave the prayer. The address of welcome was given by Mrs. Gertrude Page with the reply given by Mrs. Shaffer of Rodney W.I. who will host the district annual next year.

Mrs. Lorne Daniel, district board director for district 21, was present and ratified the branch district directors.

On Feb. 12, 1972, the 75th anniversary celebrations of Women's Institute in Ontario was held at the Royal York Hotel in Toronto and on April 15th the 75th anniversary was celebrated by the district Institutes of West and East Elgin at the Grace United Church in St. Thomas.

Mr. E. Cook, Director of the new residence for the retarded in St. Thomas, spoke briefly.

On display were a number of articles brought by the Wallacetown, Rodney and Iona Institutes. Also there was a display of knits, macrame by Mrs. Gordon Gow.

Mrs. Herbert Jackson of Fingal was presented with a cup and saucer with the Institute Crest on it for her untiring work on the Tweedsmuir Book.

Wallacetown Women's Institute was the recipient of the trophy presented by the President of Tyrconnell Institute for the most members attending of any Institute present.

Just before the noon luncheon, Mrs. Vermont Pow, President of W.I. of London Area, spoke on the 75th anniversary celebration prior to the lighting of the candles on the birthday cake.

Mrs. Ruth Marcou introduced the new home economist for Elgin County, Miss Lois Ferguson.

Following the noon luncheon, greetings were brought by Mrs. Chas. Munro, London Area Convention President; Mrs. Keith Hiepleh, R.R. 2, Springfield, President Elgin County Rally W.I.; Mrs. Wm. Holmes, Aylmer, President of Elgin East W.I.; Mrs. Wm. Wallace, R.R. 7, Tillsonburg, President South W.I.

A skit was presented by Cowal Women's Institute called "The Institute Story". The parts of the founders of the Women's Institute, Adelaide Hoodless and Erland Lee were played by Mrs. Donald A. McCallum as Adelaide and Mrs. Russell Campbell as Erland. The narrator was Mrs. Robert Patterson.

Other persons taking part were Mrs. Ivan MacAdam, Mrs. John Rowe, Mrs. James Campbell, Mrs. Archie McTavish, Mrs. Archie T. Campbell, and Mrs. Neil McCallum.

A sing-song was conducted by Mrs. Mel Gowan and Mrs. J. West.

Mrs. Lorne Daniel conducted the election and installation of officers -

Past President	- Mrs. Harold Butler, R.1, St. Thomas
President	- Mrs. Gordon Gow, Dutton
1st Vice Pres.	- Mrs. Ivan MacAdam, R.4, Iona Sta.
2nd Vice Pres.	- Mrs. Elias Reck, R.5, St. Thomas
Sec.-Treas.	- Mrs. Russell Campbell, R.1, Iona St
Fed. Rep.	- Mrs. MacAdam, R. 4, Iona Sta.
Alternate Fed. Rep.	- Mrs. Ralph Palmer, Shedden
Public Relations Officer	- Mrs. Walter McMillan, Dutton
Auditors	- Mrs. G. Woolner, Wardsville
	- Mrs. W. Leipmann, West Lorne
Standing Committee	
Tweedsmuir Curator	- Mrs. Herbert Jackson, Fingal
Associate Curator	- Mrs. Morley Adams, R. 7, St. Thomas
Resolutions	- Mrs. David Fraser, Dutton
Family Consumer Affairs	- Mrs. Herbert Parks, Shedden
Educational and Cultural Activities	- Mrs. Doug. Walters, Wallacetown
Nominating Committee	- Mrs. Earl Keutch, Rodney
	- Mrs. Roy McNeil, Dutton
	- Mrs. Cecil Waite, Port Stanley
Agriculture and Can. Ind.	- Mrs. Bertha Cooper, West Lorne
Citizenship and World Affairs	- Mrs. Robert Campbell, R.1, Rodney

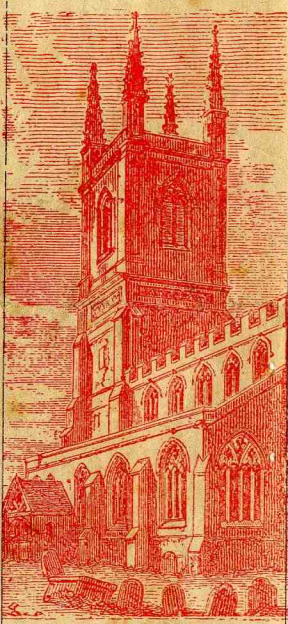
The Memorial Service was conducted by Mrs. Bertha Cooper of West Lorne. Mrs. Harold Butler reported for the Elgin Manor and Mrs. Paul Jefferies for the Elgin Pioneer Museum and told of the lovely decorating being done. The Museum Tea is to be held on June 9th from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Mother and Father of Mrs John S. Pearce

Pledge.

WILT thou have this woman to be thy wedded wife, to live together after God's ordinance in the holy estate of Matrimony? Wilt thou love her, comfort her, honour, and keep her in sickness and in health; and forsaking all others, keep thee only unto her so long as ye both shall live?

"I WILL."



Pledge.

WILT thou have this man to be thy wedded husband, to live together after God's ordinance in the holy estate of Matrimony? Wilt thou obey him, serve him, love, honour and keep him in sickness and in health; and forsaking all others, keep thee only unto him, so long as ye both shall live?

"I WILL."

Marriage Certificate

I Hereby Certify that on the _____ day of _____ 190

HOLY MATRIMONY

according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Church of England, was solemnized by me, by authority of License between John Brown of the Port of Talbot in the County of Elgin Province of Ontario Dominion of Canada, and Annie Laura Jones of the Port of Talbot in the County of Elgin Province of Ontario and Dominion aforesaid.

Witness my hand at this 28th day of September 1904

In presence of Annie Stidwile
W. J. Stidwile

Walsham
Officiating Minister.

No. _____ Registered at St Thomas Ont