

## Dutton-Dunwich Red Cross forced to close after 55 years

It is with regret that after 55 years of service to the community and abroad, the Dutton and Dunwich Branch of the Red Cross, is to be dissolved. Demands on the committee have become unreasonable and it can no longer meet the requirements from the regional office.

### History

From the time of its inception, the purpose of Red Cross has been the prevention and alleviation of human suffering.

It was on June 24, 1859, when Henri Dunant, after the Battle of Solferino, Italy, saw hundreds of wounded and dying soldiers lying on the battlefield with no one coming to their aid, that he organized a group of volunteers to bring aid to these soldiers.

In 1864, the Geneva Convention was signed by 12 countries creating the Red Cross Society. The symbol of this society was a red cross on a white background, the reverse of the Swiss flag, honouring Henri Dunant's homeland.

The Canadian Red Cross Society was established by an Act of Parliament in 1909. It had 5 hospitals in England and one in France during the first World War.

After 1918, many Red Cross Hospitals or outposts were

established in remote areas. New Ontario (Northern Ontario) had many such outposts.

It was not until 1927 that the Canadian Red Cross Society was recognized internationally.

### Red Cross in Dutton

In September of 1914, the Talbot Chapter of the IODE was established. The men belonged to the newly organized Patriotic Society and the Dutton Women's Institute had a Red Cross Committee. These three groups shipped bales of supplies overseas consisting of bandages, socks, pillow cases, and pillows.

In August of 1915, nine cars of steers left Dutton consigned to France.

The ladies of the IODE thought they would like to buy a machine gun. They had the money almost raised when word was received from the Government that it would provide its fighting forces with the necessary guns. This money was transferred to a disabled veterans fund.

Dutton Council gave \$800.00 to the Canadian Red Cross. It also canvassed all those who were not taxpayers for a contribution.

The IODE gave \$300.00 to a Great War Veterans Association for a club room which closed in 1921.

### Local Charter

The Dutton and Dunwich Branch of the Canadian Red Cross Society was chartered on October 26, 1939.

The organizational meeting

was sponsored by the Dutton Women's Institute. The first president was Bill Hollingshead and R.E. Fraser the first Campaign Chairman. Over \$4,000.00 was raised yearly

during the war years. Mrs. Hilda Crawford was in charge of the workroom committee and remained in this position until this committee was disbanded in the late 1960's.

The contribution of this committee to the war effort may be glimpsed from the 1940 report and this is only a small portion of that list: 1648 pairs of socks, 248 sweaters, 793 hospital bedgowns, 347 pairs of pyjamas, 354 pneumonia jackets, 58 quilts and 107 blankets. This committee had 235 active workers.

In 1943, the Independent Order of Oddfellows started to sponsor Blood Clinics, assisted by the local Red Cross Society.

In 1945, there were 860 paid up members and 70 attended the annual meeting.

### Since the war and today

The Blood Donor Clinics, which stopped after the war, were started again in 1960. The high of 557 donations was reached in 1977 and for the past several years have been consistently over the 450 mark in three clinics.

The Red Cross Rooms had a loan cupboard from which wheel chairs, walkers, three-pronged canes, crutches, etc.

(continued on page 3)



**CHARTER BECOMES HISTORY** – Dutton-Dunwich Red Cross Branch secretary Nellie Mezenberg (left) and longtime member Dorothy Dupuy (since 1948) are pictured looking at the charter of October 26, 1939. With less than a month before its 55th anniversary, the committee has found it necessary to dissolve the local organization.

# Red Cross to close

(continued from page 1)

were loaned for short periods of time.

This branch of the Red Cross Society supported the swimming and water safety programs conducted at the local pool. Around 300 youngsters are enrolled for lessons each summer.

The Bobier Convalescent Home was supported by having two Red Cross representatives on the auxiliary as well as a group of volunteers who visited the Home bringing cheer on a weekly basis.

The Emergency Services Committee gave aid to local victims of fire whenever the need arose.

Although Red Cross Youth is not as active as it was at one time, the young people at the High School organize the December Blood Clinic held in that institution and two youth were sent to the Leadership Training Camp in 1987.

A campaign for funds was conducted each March but the group was never able to reach the contributions of over \$4,000.00 collected during the war years. The closest was in 1988 with a total of \$3,469.75.

This money was sent to Toronto and then the local branch received money back from Toronto as needed to carry on the work of Red Cross in this community.

Hundreds of volunteers gave thousands of hours over the years to alleviate human suffering wherever the need arose in the community.

Although the local branch is in the process of disbanding, the three Blood Donor Clinics will be held with the next one to take place at the West Elgin Secondary School at the end of November.

The loan cupboard which most recently had been operating out of the Dutton Dunwich Library by the local branch will come from the district level in St. Thomas, and other services are in the

*process of being dropped.*



ATTEND SCHOOL REUNION — All set to cut the special cake are, from the left, Dorothy (Hyde) Derrough, Donald Graham and Ross Carswell, organizers of this event. A good turnout was on

hand for the very successful S.S. #5 Dunwich School Reunion held at Iona Community Hall on Saturday.

## S.S. #5 Dunwich School holds reunion

Approximately 100 persons met on Saturday in Iona Community Hall where a reunion of former students and teachers of S.S. #5 Dunwich School gathered for an afternoon of reminiscing.

Coming the farthest distance was Mrs. Pat (Pelky) Scott who travelled 2,000 miles from Strathmore, Alberta. The oldest person present and a former student was Marwood Robbins of Iona. As well, three teachers were in attendance, Marvin Degraw, now of Windsor, Olive Rycroft and Ann (Carmickle) Vance.

Ross Carswell, Donald Graham and Dorothy (Hyde) Derrough, former students, arranged the most enjoyable event.

### History

The first school in this area was located on the Southwold side of the townline in the southern part of Iona. This log building stood near the valley and served parts of both

Dunwich and Southwold Townships. In 1844 a new school was built at Clark's Hollow, one mile west of the townline and one mile south of Highway 3. The school was on the farm of Jonah Clark overlooking the valley. On February 16, 1852 the section was divided in two. The northern part remained as S.S. #5, while the southern part became S.S. #14.

A new frame school was built in 1863 on the north side of Highway 3, 1 mile west of Iona. The previous year the school had been designated a "free school" with the funds to be raised through the taxation of property. At some point before 1916 the schoolhouse was brick-veneered.

By 1920's discussion on Township School Boards had begun and at the annual ratepayers' meeting on December 30, 1925 the people of S.S. #5 expressed their views on the matter: "S.S. #5 is strongly

opposed to the Township Board of Schools control as in their opinion it leads to inefficiency and extravagance."

The school was closed in June of 1965, and in September of 1966 the building was

sold by auction to Joe Van Bree for \$1,200. As of 1982, the former school-house became a private residence.

Those in attendance were already talking about future reunions.

# Wallacetown Women's Institute reviews Tweedsmuir History

The Wallacetown Women's Institute was hostess recently to an interesting afternoon of reviewing Tweedsmuir History Books and a wonderful display of history of the surrounding community.

The Tweedsmuir History was first started by the late Lady Tweedsmuir who saw the need of preserving history and our heritage and approached the Women's Institute to start a book - thus the Tweedsmuir Book.

While the attendance was not as anticipated it was noted the interest given by those who did attend as they browsed through the tables of history and records.

There was a wonderful display of Institute records back to 1912 along with pictures of members throughout the year;

church and cemetery records, St. Peter's and St. Stephen's Anglican, St. Helen's Catholic, Methodist, Presbyterian and other church records.

A book by Fannie Backus Docker brought back memories of St. Peter's and the Women's League. There were Memorial Books of World War One and Two; family books - Sims and Casey; old newspapers and magazines no longer printed. As one went through the various books there were many memories of family reunions, weddings, births, baptisms, deaths and happenings in the community through the years, and also there was Terry Heeney's book of Dutton.

While the audience were browsing through history, Maxine Campell provided music most fitting for the event - some old - some new. Thank you Maxine.

Our community has so much history and we are grateful for the work Helen Van Brenk has put into compiling these records. They are our heritage.

The Women's Institute is looking forward to compiling a History Book.

After browsing through history the audience were served refreshments and a cup of tea.

Ronald Jones was winner of the door prize on a ticket drawn by Florence Avery.

Picture of Tweedsmuir History books on display at Wallacetown Hall on the 16th of October 1994.



Sally McIntyre with the Tweedsmuir book fund sign.



Spent the Afternoon with WALLACETOWN W.I.

Looking at

**Tweedsmuir History Books**

WALLACETOWN HALL

**Sunday, October 16th**

1:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. /94

Music and Refreshments

Donations to our History Book Fund.

Members of the Wallacetown Womens Institute helped the day of the Tweedsmuir book fund raising. The members names from left to right are Marjorie Ripley, Helen Van Brenk, Ruby McGrugan, Gladys Graham, Darlene Ford, and Sally McIntyre.