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Wallacetown W. I.
NOTES ON WOMEN'S INSTITUTE compiled by Grace McKillop

In reading over the old minute books I found information of interest to me and I thought you might like to refresh your memories on some of the activities during the years.

Beginning in 1912 the meetings were held the first Thursday of the month and they have remained on the same day until now. Quite often the meetings were held in the members' homes, especially in the winter months. They were held at times in the Presbyterian Church, Methodist Church, Anglican Church, Town Hall and later on in the United Church.

Some of the homes had names such as:
Ameljahurst - Home of the Misses Sifton
Elgin Acres - Miss E. McKillop's home
Glebe - Mrs. E. Docker's home
Lyonsholme - Mrs. D. W. Graham's home
Maple Front - Miss Kate Cairns' home

After the new Hall was opened in 1948 all the meetings were held there and have been ever since.

The first meetings started with the singing of the Maple Leaf Forever, and at one meeting a gramophone was used to play it. This was followed by The Lord's Prayer.

It wasn't until 1927 that the Ode was used in starting the meetings, and in 1949 the Mary Stuart Collect was added, read by Mrs. Martelle at first, but later all repeated it together, followed by the Lord's Prayer. This is still our opening at the meetings.

Besides the usual standing committees they had Legislation and Immigration, Canadianization and Relief Committees.

The business transacted made interesting reading. They seemed to have trouble with a stove bought for the hall. Had a motion at one meeting to have it taken out or it should be made to work right, but finally paid \$12.00 for it.

During World War 1 they went in with Dunwich and Southwold to buy a machine gun. In 1914 they bought a piano for the hall. In 1923 they helped pay for the street lights in Wallacetown. They started to raise money for a new Town Hall after the war in the 20's. This dragged on through the years with discussions on plots, etc.

Contributions were made to a large number of funds during war years and after.

The W. I. had a Secretary and another Secretary for the Red Cross. Miss Maggie McCallum acted for the Red Cross for awhile, also Mrs. J. A. Cameron, who was Secretary for years.

The W. I. helped the men of the community collect for the Red Cross. They collected on Clay St., East and West, Lake Rd., East and West, 9th Concession and Wallacetown area.

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Here is a list of some of the gifts to needy causes:

Armenian Relief	- \$50.00
Belgium	- 15.00
British Red Cross; bales, milk, money	- 15.00
Canadian Institute for Blind	- 50.00
Care in later years - -	
Children's Shelter, fruit, crate of eggs	- 25.00
Chinese famine	- 25.00
Choral Society	- 50.00
European Relief	- 50.00
Fire sufferers at Cobalt	- 50.00
French Red Cross	- 10.00
Greek Refugee children	- 10.00
Greek War Relief	- 10.00
Memorial Hospital extension	- 500.00
Military Hospital Div.	- 25.00
Navy League of Canada	- 25.00
Queen's Fund	- 100.00
Sailors' Fund	- 25.00
Salvation Army	- 25.00
Sock Fund, Toronto	- 75.00
Soldiers' Aid Commission - Boxes	- 25.00
Siberia Relief	- 25.00
Sick Children's Hospital, Toronto	- 15.00
Russian Relief	- 25.00
Y.W.C.A.	- 25.00
Cancer Fund (later on)	- 25.00

This is just a sample of monies spent; later donations were given to these funds.

The members took a number of Homemaker Clubs in the years, including a Sewing Club, and they rented machines for it. Also held were a Millinery Course, Mat Course, Lamp Shades Course, Block Printing Course and many others.

Papers and demonstrations were on the programmes at most of the meetings. They had a travelling library from the first. Membership during the years ran from 12 to 23 to 20 and in 1924 had 70 members after a membership drive, and again in 1948 had 65 members.

Activities for raising money were varied. They put on lunches for the fair, and later on served meals at it; held concerts, put on plays, garden parties, bazaars, candy sales, etc. They entertained other W.I.'s as we do today, having a picnic with Shedden and Fingal at Port Talbot one year and many other picnics here and there.

We went on bus trips in later years to the Ice Carnival, Royal Winter Fair, factories, Pincroft, Shakespearian Festival, Expo, Cinerama, museums, and others.

Institute applied and received a government grant of \$3.00 for years; also applied to Council for a grant of \$10.00 a few times.

Girls in the community took part in the programmes with musical number, etc. We also had some girls' clubs, but as yet I haven't the leaders' names.

The W.I. celebrated their 15th, 25th, 35th and 50th anniversaries with guests, cakes and programmes.

They had the interests of the community on their minds as well, and were instrumental in helping a widow get the Widow's Allowance for herself and family. Help was given to families after a fire or other disasters.

Prizes were donated to the fair for needlework, cooking and other crafts. Money for teaching music in the schools was given, as well as pictures as prizes for the schools.

Discussions were held at the meetings on Old Age Pensions and in 1934 on hydro. It was felt it would be too expensive for use then.

Songbooks were ordered in 1925 and again in 1945 some more were added.

During both wars they knitted and sewed, made quilts and packed boxes for overseas. They helped collect salvage and in World War 2 sent women to the Hostess House at Fingal Air Base to serve lunches at night.

In 1944 mention was made of starting the Tweedsmuir book. Later activities included opening of the new Hall in 1948 and serving lunches at it. A table with a memorial plaque and two chairs were donated to the hall. Dishes and other equipment were donated as well. They bought the gas range for the kitchen in 1948. The same year they adopted a W.I. in England to send food boxes to.

In 1950 a ladies' choir was organized. Later on a triple trio sang at various times.

In 1947 the Blue Cross was started and in 1951 the Co-op Insurance commenced. Around that time old wool was sent for blankets. Premium blankets were donated to various needy places - Greece, the Bobier Home and families in need of help. Along with Tyrconnell we helped furnish a room at the Bobier Home and sent treats to the residents of the home at Christmas; also helped at the annual teas held every summer.

In 1952 Institute made ditty bags for the Korean war. In 1953, \$146.00 was given for an incubator at the St. Thomas-Elgin General Hospital. Money was given through UNESCO to a tractor fund for overseas and to a Ceylon Fund; also a donation to St. John's Ambulance and another for a television to Elgin Manor. Treats were sent to the Manor as well. They helped at the Museum Teas and at the Ont. Hospital. Gifts were sent there also. They helped with X-Ray clinics here at Wallacetown and Baby Clinics. The Institute had an adopted boy overseas for a number of years and sent him gifts and money. He was Heinz Maiwold.

They also gave donations to the Retarded Childrens' School in St. Thomas. In 1967 we made a centennial quilt depicting the flowers of the Provinces.

All meetings were closed with the National Anthem.

In the early years the hostess served lunch, but in 1921 a regular lunch was started - a 10¢ tea with 3 articles to be served. We now have a 25¢ tea and all enjoy the tea and chatter hour after the meetings.

WALLACETOWN WOMENS INSTITUTE MAY 19/93.
HIGHLIGHTS OVER THE LAST 80 YEARS.

The Wallacetown Institute was organized July 3rd 1912 by Mrs N.J.Hunter a delegate from the Department of Agriculture. Officers were appointed at that meeting. Mrs D.W.Graham was the first president and Miss Maude Robb. was the Secretary and Treasurer.

The first meeting was held in the Wallacetown Hall Sept 6th 1912. It was decided to hold the meetings in the hall during the summer and in the members homes in the winter. There were 36 members the first year.

Miss Minnie Gow gave an excellent paper on "LABOR SAVING DEVICES IN THE HOME" she was the first speaker.

A prize was to be offered at Wallacetown Fair .for the best working mans lunch the price not to exceed 15¢ and to be sold afterwards.

Books for circulating library were to be sent for.

A motion was passed that Miss Minnie Gow;Mrs S.Turville be a committee to introduce the ladies at the meeting if not already acquainted.

During the first years of the Institute; doations were given to e.g. Armenia Relief; Belguim Relief, Chinese Famine, French Red Cross, Greek Refuge Children, Russian Relief.

They helped to pay for the street lights in Wallacetown, and raised money for a new town hall in the twenties.

Since that time the members have helped in many local organization in the commenity.

We have celebrated our 15th,25th, 35th, 50th, 60th, 70th, 75th, and 80th,Anniversaries.



SWEETHEART ROCKATHON RAISES FUNDS – The new home of the Dutton-Dunwich Adult Club at 169 Main Street was a busy spot last Wednesday morning as these 6 rocking chairs were kept going for two hours raising approximately \$1300. Rockers at the time this picture was taken were, clockwise from the bottom left, May Hull, Florence Avery, Dessie Cook, Audrey Leitch, Lillian Lunn and Mae Graham. Other rockers included Helen McLauchlin, Ken Willson, Jane Martin, Marge Cowell,

Rhea Couture and Rena Campbell. Florence Avery, pictured bottom right, all decked out for the occasion, raised well over \$100. These funds raised will go towards paying for the facility as well as help out with various activities.

