

ELGIN *Life*

SHARING LOCAL HISTORY... About 96 women took part in a recent Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario Tweedsmuir History workshop in Wallacetown. Participants included Ruth Matheson, left, London-Area curator, Marcie Johnston, FWIO Tweedsmuir history curator, Marg Harris, FWIO president, and local historian Alice Paterson, who was a guest speaker. (T-J PHOTO)



BY TIMES-JOURNAL STAFF

WALLACETOWN — Ninety-six women from across Ontario met here Tuesday for a common purpose — to continue the preservation of this province's communities.

The women, all members of Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario, were taking part in a one-day WI Tweedsmuir History workshop.

Marcie Johnston, FWIO Tweedsmuir History curator, said the workshop is an opportunity for institute members to share their own experiences compiling local histories and give others helpful tips along the way.

"We're encouraging others that are here today to go back to their communities to find more information," she said, noting that the workshops were named after Lady Tweedsmuir who decades

W.I. members share goal of preserving local history

earlier emphasized the important role women's institutes could play in preserving local history.

The tradition has continued throughout the province since then, with membership

swelling to more than 14,000 members.

Marg Harris, FWIO president, said the organization will celebrate its 100th anniversary in Hamilton next year, where the WI movement

first started (Stoney Creek).

She said the organization doesn't limit its activities to preserving the past. Harris said the FWIO has always been an organization that promotes personal growth and community action. Members learn how to speak before a crowd and make presentations while participating in an organization that believes in pushing for changes in matters involving public safety and other concerns. In the past, they have passed resolutions regarding everything from unsafe food packaging and transportation to the environment.

Mrs. Harris said the organization is well-respected by all levels of government because it's not a special interest group, but instead chooses to focus on the good of the community as a whole.



Elgin West District W.I. hosts Tweedsmuir History Workshop

Elgin West District Women's Institute hosted the London Area Tweedsmuir History Curators Workshop in South Dunwich Community Hall.

Ninety-six ladies representing Middlesex, Oxford, Huron, Elgin and part of Perth Counties met to hear new ideas to continue the preservation of local history in their respective counties.

Mrs. Alice Paterson of Rodney was the morning speaker telling of the first settlers in Aldborough and Dunwich Townships. Early settlers also cared for portions on their

roads. Some familiar names in Aldborough are Fleming, Campbell, McAlpine and in Dunwich, Col. Talbot, Crane, Patterson, Story, Pearce, Backus and Coyne. Ontario's Lt. Governor Jackman is a descendant of the Pearce family.

F.W.I.O. Tweedsmuir History Curator Marie Johnston stated "History is exciting". This is an opportunity for W.I. members to share experiences in compiling local history. Some helpful hints she suggested were: Always wear gloves, have historical skits, and be proud of 'our' past history, a fact sheet called "Timely Tips for Curators" is available. Helen Whaling stated 120 pages per book is sufficient weight. Never use rubber cement.

F.W.I.O. president spoke saying the 100th Anniversary of F.W.I.O. will be celebrated in 1997 in Hamilton.

Roll call - A Wedding Gift, was answered with many interesting antiques.

Displays included dolls, art, needlecraft and kitchen antiques.



TWEEDSMUIR HISTORY WORKSHOP - A total of 96 women attended the Tweedsmuir History Workshop hosted by the Elgin West District Women's Institute on August 13th. Pictured are, left to right: Ruth Matheson, FWIO London area curator; Helen Van Brenk, London area assistant curator, and Dolores Shapton, FWIO London area president.

Draw winners were Mae Graham, Dutton and Sue Wilson, Melbourne.

Lady Tweedsmuir, years

ago, emphasizing the important roll W.I. members could play in preserving history.

Thus, the Tweedsmuir History

tradition has continued through the years and W.I. members share a goal in preserving local history.



Tweedsmuir history workshop

BY: CATHARINE McLANDRESS

The Wallacetown Women's Institute hosted an annual Tweedsmuir History workshop at the South Dunwich Community Hall on August 13. Among displays by area members, the 96 attendees from all over the London area, learned more about finding and preserving historical information for future generations.

Local historian Alice Paterson gave a talk on the history of three local families, emphasizing how much history there is in every area. A member of the West Elgin Genealogical and Historical Society and the Tyrconnell Heritage Society, Paterson recounted tales such as the legend that has sprung up around the arrival of Nellie Campbell 200 years ago. Paterson also gave clues as to where to find information, such as tombstones and diaries, and how to preserve the information for the benefit of

others, such as historical plays and local history publications.

Marg Harris, president of the Federated Women's Institute of Ontario (FWIO), was present at the gathering and spoke of the scope of Women's Institutes mandates and their far-reaching effect on the welfare of all residents. A main focus is the preserving of local historical information through the keeping of Tweedsmuir history books, a venture that is taken very seriously by local curators and will prove invaluable to future generations. As the FWIO heads into its 100th year next year, renewed emphasis is being placed on safe and healthy communities, and on dealing with marketing and more autonomy for the organization. Harris says, "the directors will be looking at strategic plans ... to make a secure base, a vision and what steps to follow."



Among those attending a recent Tweedsmuir history workshop were: (left to right) Ruth Matheson, London area curator; Marcie Johnston, FWIO Tweedsmuir History curator; Marg Harris, FWIO president and Alice Paterson, local historian and guest speaker. (C. McLandress)

Sounds like a hoot, this local history

DUNWICH TOWNSHIP — Always wear gloves, perform skits and don't produce a book with more than 120 pages. Those were some of the tips that 96 members of the Federation of Women's Institute of Ontario heard at a workshop here on how to preserve local history. Participants came to the meeting at South Dunwich Community Hall from Middlesex, Oxford, Huron, Elgin and Perth counties.

THE LONDON FREE PRESS
Aug 26/96.— Dutton Advance





Quilt and DOLLS DISPLAY ---
Done by Catherine McAlpine.



Springfield Women's Institute,
Display of Antique clothes
and doilies.

LONDON AREA CONVENTION
OCT 23rd 1997.



1. Secretary -- Doris Spence.
2. LONDON AREA President Gladys Egelton.



1. Willa Johnston.
2. Grace Campbell.



Jeanne Leitch giving a report on Tweedsmuir book.