

Historical amalgamation of Elgin W.I. Districts

Elgin West District Women's Institute held their 90th annual meeting in Fingal United Church hosted by Boxall Branch of the Women's Institute, on Wednesday, May 13th. Theme for the day, "A new beginning that starts with you." The Opening Ode was sung followed by the Mary Stewart Collect commencing the meeting.

Eleven District Directors were ratified by Board Director Willa Johnston.

Correspondence from Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs advised the W.I. of the upcoming structural change which will be better able to serve rural districts. President Ann McLean, in her address, spoke on the theme expressing desire as the new District of Elgin County Women's Institutes, to combine efforts to promote the activities of the Women's Institutes of Ontario. The new Elgin County District Women's Institute was to be effective following amalgamation at the afternoon session.

Reports of the secretary, treasurer, financial examiners, program co-ordinator, Public Relations Officer, Tweedsmuir History curator, Farm Safety representative and Elgin County Pioneer Museum were presented as well as a Cancer Tea report. Boxall W.I. Branch will host this event in Fingal United Church October 24th in the form of a Coffee Break.

Following the noon luncheon the Elgin County W.I.



FIRST EXECUTIVE FORMED – With the amalgamation of East and West into the Elgin County District Women's Institute last week, history was made in the organization. Local W.I. members installed on the new executive include, left to right: Eleanor McMillan, public relations officer; Ann McLean, president; Grace Campbell, secretary-treasurer, and Rena Campbell, Elgin County Pioneer Museum representative.

Scholarship was presented to Mary Margaret Vanhoucke by Grace Campbell, chair of this committee.

Betty Van Patter and Grace Campbell reviewed the past history of Elgin East and Elgin West Districts followed by a candle lighting service uniting the two districts as one and to be known in future as the Elgin County District Women's Institute. The afternoon session commenced with singing "Hymn of all Nations".

Wallacetown Branch led in the In Memoriam service.

The Ratification of District Directors for the Elgin County District Women's Institute was conducted by Provincial Board Director Willa Johnston.

New By-laws for the District were approved. London Area President Gladys Egleton installed the 1998-99 Executive as follows:

President, Ann McLean, Port Stanley; 1st vice-president, Madeline Jenkins, Belmont; 2nd vice-president, Mary Veenstra, St. Thomas; secretary-treasurer, Grace Campbell, Iona Station; program co-ordinator, Pauline Lindsay, St. Thomas; assistant program co-ordinator, Julie Morden,

Officer, Eleanor McMillan, Dutton; Resolutions, Betty Van Patter, St. Thomas; Tweedsmuir Curator, Evelyn Hashal, Springfield; assistant curator, Sally McIntyre, Dutton; Pioneer Museum representatives Rena Campbell and Marion McKenzie; Farm Safety, Shirley Bechard and Mary Ann Caughell; Financial Examiners, Joanne Erickson and Joan Mansell. Provincial Board Director Willa Johnston presented the report of the FWIO March meeting noting that Branch membership fees are to be submitted May 31st beginning in '98 to district treasurers.

Upcoming dates to remember included Induction of Peggy Knapp into Milton

Fame June 14th; noon luncheon at Erland Lee Home June 16th; Elgin County Pioneer Museum Strawberry Social June 24th; Farm Safety Day Camp at Belmont Community Centre, Straffordville, July 15th; London Area Convention, October 22nd in Kirkton-Woodham Community Centre; Cancer Coffee Break at Fingal United Church October 24th.

Entertainment was provided by the Kingsmill Mapleton W.I. Branch.

Yarmouth Glen Branch extended an invitation to all branches to attend the 1999 District Annual, with date at place to be announced later.

Mary Veenstra extended courtesies for the day. Singing of 'O' Canada concluded the meeting.

Farm Museum Hall of



1, ELEANOR M'MILLAN 2 ANN M'LEAN.

3 GRACE CAMPBELL, 4 REWA Campbell.



1, ANN M'LEAN, 2 GRACE CAMPBELL

3 LYNN HOFFMAN, 4 MARY ANNE CAUGHILL.
CAUGHILL



1, SALLY M'INTYRE, 2 LOUIE LARKEY,

3, KAY WAITE, 4 HELEN VAN BRENK



The first executive of the new Elgin County Women's Institute, from left, includes: front — Eleanor McMillan, public relations officer; Madeline Jenkins, vice-president; Ann McLean, president; Willa Johnston, director for the Federated Women's Institute of Ontario; back — Julie Morden, assistant program co-ordinator; Mary Veenstra, second vice-president; Grace Campbell, secretary-treasurer; Pauline Lindsay, program co-ordinator. (T-J photo)

Elgin's WIs amalgamate

BY MARG BERRY
TIMES-JOURNAL STAFF

FINGAL — The recent gathering of members from the Elgin East and Elgin West Women's Institutes at Fingal United Church was an historic meeting.

It marked the last time the two groups would meet as separate entities. The groups from the east and west sections of the county have now been amalgamated to form the Elgin County Women's Institute (ECWI).

Ann McLean, president of the newly formed ECWI, said the amalgamation is a sign of the times.

"We're downsizing, just like the government. It just cost too much for all of these board members to meet. Everything is changing. All our districts are changing to make our numbers smaller."

Each of the districts sends representatives to the provincial board. Because of amalgamations of the districts throughout Ontario the provincial board has dropped from 32 members to 26.

"It's happening all over Ontario," McLean noted.

The new Elgin group includes 11 branches in Elgin West and five branches in Elgin East.

At the start of the amalgamation meeting, the original two county groups met separately for the last time, one upstairs in the church and the other in the lower hall. Before unification Elgin West had been in existence for 90 years, and Elgin East for 86 years.

The first meeting was a decided suc-

cess according to McLean. "It's wonderful. No one was opposed. It was unanimous."

The day included a luncheon and the first meeting under the new board. "We held a candlelight ceremony to bring us together," McLean reported.

The newly amalgamated Elgin group will meet as an executive about four times a year. In addition to McLean, the new executive includes Madeline Jenkins, vice-president; Mary Veenstra, second vice-president; Grace Campbell, secretary-treasurer; Pauline Lindsay, program co-ordinator; Julie Morden, assistant program co-ordinator; Eleanor McMillan, public relations officer; Willa Johnston, member of the provincial board of directors for the Federated Women's Institute of Ontario.

Women's Institute members discuss and act on current issues affecting the family and society. Last year Women's Institutes donated half a million volunteer hours to various causes such as 4-H, libraries, hospitals and food banks. Members meet annually with local MPPs to update them on institute activities and resolutions. Local Women's Institutes network with provincial, federal and world bodies.

"We reach out to help in the home and community," McLean explained. "We are basically rural but we also reach into urban areas."

Last year Women's Institutes celebrated 100 years, after the organization spread around the world from its beginnings in Stoney Creek, Ont.

Elgin County District W.I.

Elgin County District Women's Institute held their annual meeting in St. James Presbyterian Church recently. Theme for 1999 was "The Older Years - The Golden Years." Sixteen branch directors or alternates were ratified by PAC Member for Sub-Division 18, Willa Johnston.

Correspondence was received from Erland Lee Home announcing a luncheon on June 15th and 16th; flyers

from Elgin Health Unit and from Community Food Advisory Program. Upcoming dates locally are:

Strawberry Social June 23rd at the Elgin Pioneer Museum; Farm Safety Days, June 26th, Rodney Community Recreation Hall and July 10th, Malahide Fire Hall No. 1, Mount Salem; Cancer Tea, October 16th, Argyle Presbyterian Church, Crinan; Area Convention, October 28th,

Mount Brydges Community Centre.

Reports were heard from the Program Co-ordinator, Tweedsmuir History Curator, Public Relations, Resolutions and Elgin Pioneer Museum. The resolution regarding a name change for the Women's Institute of Ontario declared Elgin members to be opposed to this name change.

Shedden W.I. conducted an In Memoriam service remembering departed members saying memories continue on and on, closing with repeating Psalm 23. A display from Elgin Health Unit announcing programs geared for seniors as well as an Open House at the St. Thomas-Elgin General Hospital presenting an opportunity to view the new Mammography suite located on ground floor, giving the public an opportunity to meet staff members and representatives from Ontario Breast Screening programs,

P.A.C. member Willa Johnston gave the F.W.I.O. report stating nominations are open for the following provincial offices - president elect, Education Co-ordinator, 4 board directors, 10 PAC members including Sub-Division 18.

Winner of the Dorothy Fatcher Scholarship is Marie Brown, Woodstock and alternate winner is Elizabeth Clark, Blenheim.

Action activity was directed by a member of River Road Branch.

Officers for 1999-2000 were installed by Mrs. Pauline Lindsay, president of London area as follows:

President, Mrs. Madeline Jenkins, Belmont; vice-presidents, Mrs. M. Veenstra and Mrs. Pauline Lindsay, both of St. Thomas; past president, Ann McLean; Program Co-ordinator, Mrs. Lindsay; secretary-treasurer, Mrs. Grace Campbell, Iona Station; P.R.P. Eleanor McMillan, Dutton; Resolutions, Betty Van Patter; Tweedsmuir History, Evelyn Hoshal, Springfield.

Next year's annual meeting will be held in South Dunwich Community Hall, Wallace-town



1/ ANN McLEAN (PAST PRESIDENT) MADELINE JENKINS PRESIDENT 1999-2000



Elgin County District W.I. Officers 1999-2000