



New Dundee Women's Institute

New Dundee Branch History

The purpose or mission of the New Dundee Women's Institute is to work with and for rural and urban women and their families. It is an organization for personal growth and community action with objectives to assist and encourage women to become more knowledgeable; to promote good family life skills; to help discover and develop leadership; and help and identify needs in the community.

The New Dundee Women's Institute has a long history of contribution to our community and received a Heritage Award for 100 years of community involvement and for compiling area history. New Dundee W.I. has over 25 Tweedsmuir history books in its collection, which include information about the areas around New Dundee, Roseville, Mannheim and Rosebank (these books have been digitized and are now available online by click on the link found below). These books are used by historians to search family histories and family trees, by educators, realtors and property owners, and by people organizing special events in the area.

The New Dundee W.I. donates to various local groups in the community and assists with local festivities, gardening, and the promotion of culture. The W.I. has also been a strong advocate for change and has supported resolutions for such things as yellow lines on the roads for improved visibility, recycling of garbage, cloth instead of plastic bags, better labeling of food products, etc.

The New Dundee Women's Institute is an organization with a long history of encouraging and supporting its members as they learn, work, and socialize together, and along with the community, and endeavouring to meet needs locally, nationally and globally.

New Dundee Women's Institute Celebrates 100 Years – Tuesday June 19, 2007

Some things in Women's Institutes have changed in the last century and yet many things have remained the same or very similar.

There were 28 members in the New Dundee Women's Institute in 1907 and in 2007 they have 64 members. Of the 64 members, exactly half of them are life members with each of them having at least 25 years of service as a WI member. The New

Dundee Institute has the distinction of being the largest Women's Institute in Ontario.

A lawn social, which took place in 1910 appears to be the Institute's first fundraiser. The women also held a concert and proceeds went to the Red Cross to buy flannel and yarn. In 1919, a banquet was held for the returning soldiers from WWI.

During WWII, the New Dundee Women's Institute was sure to aid the war effort. The WI's slate of officers included a position for an officer for war work. Under this member's direction, a \$50 Victory Bond was purchased, donations were made to the sugar fund for the production of jam, and Christmas parcels were sent to local men in the armed forces.

After the war in 1945, the WI donated \$100, which was a substantial amount towards the Memorial Gates at the New Dundee Park, but two motions to help build the Band Shell at the park were voted down. Later the WI helped fund the building of the picnic shelter at the park.

IN 1947, the minutes mention that the WI took charge of the Refreshment Booth at the Community Garden Party in July and the Band Tattoo in August. Events in the park such as the annual Victoria Day celebration and New Dundee's annual birthday party in August are still fundraisers today.

IN the 1950's, a record player and records of the Bible were purchased and circulated in the community for the sick and shut in.

In 1979, twenty-eight members of the New Dundee WI were among the 150 people who attended the unveiling of a historical plaque commemorating William Wintemberg, 1876-1974, at the park. He was born in New Dundee and was an outstanding Canadian archeologist.

Since the 1980's, our WI has made donations to the community projects including park equipment, fire equipment, planting trees at the Community Centre, helping to equip the kitchen at the Community Centre, and helping with the Maple Heights facility for seniors.

In 2006, our WI was able to donate \$1000 to the St. Mary's Hospital toward the purchase of a new digital mammography machine. The money was a portion of the money raised from the Institute's successful Bridal Hat Show. It is a note of interest from the minutes in 1949, that the members had a parade of "Old Fashioned Hats." Some things never change.

The New Dundee WI looks forward to the future with excitement as it practices its motto, "For Home and Country."