

E. Manley.

Loaned to Mrs. Morrow

ST. JOHN'S WOMAN'S AUXILIARY 1894-1961

In this the 67th year of the life of St. John's Woman's Auxiliary it is good to look back giving thanks to Almighty God for the inspiration which has perpetuated the work in the intervening years since its formation on March 21st, 1894.

Records tell that it was on a bright March afternoon that the Auxiliary was founded. The meeting was held in the Parish Hall with Mrs. F.E. Gibbs in the chair, and was graced with the presence of Lady Aberdeen who assisted in the organizational procedure. Earlier, Lady Aberdeen had been present at the inaugural meeting of the West Algoma Local Council of Women. The Rev. W.J. Webster was Locum Tenens of St. John's filling in the gap between the rectorship of Canon C.J. Machin and Rev. Charles Bradshaw. The first officers were: President - Mrs. G.H. Murdock; First Vice-President - Mrs. W.J. Clarke; Second Vice-President - Mrs. Powley; Secretary - Miss M.G. Boyce. In 1913 there were two Charter members living - Mrs. N.N. Stewart and Mrs. H.H. Bray.

The year 1935 brought the Parochial Guild and the Woman's Auxiliary together to function as a single organization. The Honorary Vice-President, Mrs. R.E. Wodehouse, B.A. D.C.L., Ottawa, who is the former Madeline Keefer, a native of Port Arthur and a member of St. John's Church in her girlhood, has been welcomed here on numerous occasions during her tenure of office for 25 years as President of the Dominion Board of the W.A.

In 1938, members of St. John's Woman's Auxiliary were hostesses for the Annual Diocesan Board Meeting. A progressive step was taken in 1939 when the project of a new Rectory was undertaken. The same year the Branch participated in the meetings of the Executive of the Dominion Board which convened at the Lakehead. Before the end of that year the members arranged to do Red Cross and other war work, so that with the other sister Church societies a substantial contribution might be made from St. John's W.A.

The year 1940 saw the completion of the new Parish Hall. The Clergy Deanery were entertained in 1941, while a reception for the new Rector - Reverend (now Archdeacon) and Mrs. J.S. Smedley, and also one for Bishop and Mrs. G.F. Kingston were held. The Canon Hincks Memorial Window and the Bishop Thorneloe Fund were given support in 1942-3.

In 1944 the 50th Anniversary party of St. John's W.A. was held with special observances. The mortgages on the Parish Hall and Rectory were burned in 1947 when the 75th Anniversary of the Church was held with the Primate, Archbishop Kingston, and Bishop Wright in attendance.

The Branch extended hospitality in 1950 to the Annual Meeting of the Diocesan Board. In September, 1951, honoured guest speakers at a special meeting were: Archbishop Carrington of Quebec, Bishop Wright of Algoma and Dominion Officers returning to their homes in the east after Dominion Board sessions in the west.

Following the first Ordination service in 1952 in St. John's Church social gatherings were held. The 80th Anniversary of the Church was observed in May and regretfully, farewell was said to Archdeacon and Mrs. J.S. Smedley and family. A welcome was extended to the Reverend (now Canon) S. Maitland Craymer and Mrs. Craymer in the fall of the same year.

The year 1953 was highlighted with the meeting of the House of Bishops and the Executive Council of the General Synod.

During 1954, considerable improvements in the fabric of the Parish Hall were carried out. This being the Diamond Jubilee Year of our W.A. suitable recognition was made, and a Mammoth Tea and Reception was held, with Life members in charge of arrangements. As a special Thank-Offering, contributions were made to the Diocesan Fund for Aged Church-Women. A special Kitchen Fund was set up in this year, which was sufficiently subscribed to by profits from various catering functions and other means so that it was possible to have "Open-House" in 1955, for those interested in viewing our completely modern Kitchen. It is noted that in 1954-5-6, donations were made to Rural Churches, Van Workers, Tangyanika Milk Fund, Missionary work in

Continued

Kangra, India (Miss M. Nattress). Increased Dorcas work was accepted, also the Shingwauk School requirements. The work at York Factory, Nipigon Sunday School, Columbia Coast Mission, Indian Residential School at Sioux Lookout, and the Garden River project were recognized in a tangible manner.

The year 1957 saw the departure of Canon and Mrs. Craymer from our midst, and the sadness of their leaving was lessened with the arrival of the present Rector, Reverend and Mrs. Alvin J. Thomson and family whom we welcomed with happiness and affection, as they took up life in the Parish. Events noted in this period were the Teen Fashion Show; Interior Decorating Demonstration; China Display; Party for the residents at Cumberland Hall (Blind Home); the Junior Festival, G.A. Rally; welcome to the Reverend J.T.L. James, Assistant Curate, and the Ordination of the Reverend Mark Sauerbrei as perpetual Deacon.

The Diocesan Rally for the G.A. early in 1958 heralded a chain of important events. Rings of Honour were presented to three girls from St. John's G.A. and one to a Leader leaving the City. Support was given to the proposed Girls' Auxiliary Leadership Training Course to be held in the fall of that year, under Miss Florence Lamb, also to the expected visit of Miss Eva Hasell, O.B.E., of the Vanners. Continuation of the educational support of Sugu John in India was decided upon, and has been consistently maintained. The great work of the Bible and Prayer Book Society; Humewood House; The Anglican Women's Training College, were remembered as well as our Prayer Partner, the Reverend James Brodie, whose wonderful spirit in spite of his grievous illness has strengthened our faith, are worthy of mention, as is the contributing share for the expense of the Bishop's Messenger's car, and the assistance given the Church at Matheson in the Diocese of Moosonee, in the form of shipments of used clothing for re-sale. Miss Lois Stephenson, Director of Christian Education, with her fine personality and many talents endeared herself to all, as she worked with the various Youth Groups, and her contribution to the work of the G.A. was most outstanding. The Happy Handicaps Party, and the entertainment and gifts supplied for the Anglican patients in the Ontario Hospital were commendable phases of Social Service work. The visit of the Reverend Sister Rosemary Anne, S.S.J.D., to hold a Quiet Day in St. John's Church will long be remembered by the large number of members attending, and gave each one an opportunity to more readily understand the work of this religious order. As has been the custom over a period of years to share in the Spring and Fall meetings of the Thunder Bay Deanery, also in the World Day of Prayer Services, it was our pleasure to welcome the Spring Deanery and also to take part in the World Day Prayer Service held in our Church in 1959.

The year 1960 observed throughout the world as World Refugee Year gave the members an opportunity to contribute generously towards the Clothing Fund endorsed under the Dorcas Department. Commemorating the 75th Anniversary theme, the Roberta Tilton Fund was especially remembered in this year. The increased need of equipment for Camp Gitchigomee (Sandstone Lake Camp) brought a generous response from the funds. The Reverend Mark Conliffe who came to us as Assistant Curate has readily established himself in the affection of the parishioners. It would seem that considerable parochial work was maintained in addition to the missionary obligations. Concentrated efforts are made in the many phases of Social Service work, and delegates have been in attendance at the meetings of the Diocesan Board and those of affiliated societies - The Victorian Order of Nurses and the West Algoma Local Council of Women. Frequent Corporate Communion and Breakfasts for our young people are held. The Branch has honoured Forty Life Members - thirteen of whom have entered Life Eternal. The younger Branches of the Auxiliary, namely: The Little Helpers', The Girls' Auxiliary, The Junior Auxiliary, have prospered under able leadership. Though there is not a Branch of the Church Boys' League at present in the Parish, nevertheless in times past it filled a very definite need, and the coveted Norah Atkins Shield was won by St. John's C.B.L. on several occasions.

Past Presidents on record are:- Mrs. H.S.H. Goodier 1919; Mrs. N. McDougall 1920-21; Mrs. West 1922-23; Mrs. C.N. Laurie 1924; Mrs. C.W. Coulter 1925-6-7; Mrs. C.J. Russell 1928; Mrs. J.M. Kelly 1929-30; Mrs. S.W.R. Stretton 1931-32; Mrs. J.R. Kiscock 1933-34; Mrs. J.K. Benner 1935-36; Mrs. E.H. Dixon 1937-38; Mrs. M. Eynon 1939-40-41; Mrs. C. Guy 1942; Mrs. R. de Waller 1943-4-5; Mrs. F.B. Moran 1946-7-8; Mrs. J.R. Kiscock 1949-50; Mrs. A. Manley 1951-2-3; Mrs. G. Brabrooke 1954; Mrs. C.G. Taylor 1955; Miss Verbena Young 1956-7; Mrs. E.M. Jellet 1958-9; Mrs. C. Humby 1960, and Mrs. C. Dilley the present President who exemplifies all that is fine in leadership.

The foregoing, we hope, will give our visitors an insight into the work of St. John's Woman's Auxiliary since its founding March 24th, 1894.

But, we would be remiss, indeed, if we failed to acquaint you with the fact that in the City of Port Arthur, in addition to St. John's Woman's Auxiliary there are the three other Branches of the W.A. At St. Michael and All Angels Church, where you will be welcomed on Wednesday, the W.A. organized in 1948 has a strong membership of sixty members.

North-eastwards in the City is situated St. Stephen's Church. Here there is a most flourishing W.A. organized in 1949, and its membership stands at twenty.

Then towards the centre of the City we have St. George's Church, with twenty-seven energetic members of a W.A. organized in 1950.

Much good fellowship exists between these Branches, and their contribution to the arrangements with the hostess W.A. of St. John's Church has been most heart-warming.

All the progress made and the effective work done at home and abroad by the Woman's Auxiliary has been due to the spirit of the motto - THE LOVE OF CHRIST CONSTRAINETH - working out in the lives of faithful women. That spirit has been the golden cord which has bound together members, old and young, in town and country, from sea to sea, in busy centres and in the lonely stretches of the great frontiers of our land. It was the visualization of the deputation of seven women, who on April 17th, 1885, in the City of Ottawa, met with the members of the Board of Foreign and Domestic Missions that has made the dream a living reality. To Mrs. Roberta E. Tilton our tribute is paid, and may her zeal and devotion to the cause which she staunchly upheld continue to fire our efforts for the Extension of God's Kingdom on Earth.

Prepared by Mrs. A. Manley, Vice-President, Thunder Bay Deanery.

The march 1967 the history from 1961-1967 was added - bringing it up-to-date. Unfortunately this has been mislaid -

The history for the balance of 1967 from March 16th of that year - and the complete 1968 history still not written up.