

August 2025

Monthly Newsletter for Federated Women's Institutes of Canada

WI Connections



The dog days of August...

Always a great sport, President Lynn MacLean and her two grandsons and the dogs did a photo shoot for this August's WI Connections.

Shown here are Jayce (11), Grammy Lynn, and Jaxon (8).

And the stars of the show...Meg on the left and Stanley on the right.

**Dogs are not our whole life, but
they make our lives whole.**

Roger Caras

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From the President's desk...

August is a transitional month, often characterized by a more relaxed schedule, summer vacations, outdoor activities such as bonfires, and warm evening environments. It serves as the period before September, when routines and meetings typically resume. Many WI branches choose to pause their regular meetings during the summer months to allow members to recharge, participate in outings, and engage in local fairs and exhibitions.

If you're in Ontario or visiting this summer, consider stopping by the Adelaide Hunter Hoodless Homestead or the Erland Lee Museum. Both are national historic sites located in scenic areas, offering tours and picnic facilities. The Homestead also serves as the national office of the Federated Women's Institutes of Canada (FWIC), while the Lee Museum is the provincial headquarters of the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario (FWIO).

Both are significant in the history of the Women's Institute. Janet Lee drafted the constitution for the first WI in 1897 at Lee's dining room table, while the Homestead is the childhood home of Adelaide, who inspired the creation of the Women's Institutes.

In July, His Worship David Bailey, mayor of the County of Brant, invited the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, the Honourable Edith Dumont, to visit the county. On the second day of her visit, Her Honour visited the Adelaide Hunter Hoodless Homestead. She was guided through the house by summer students Veronica Boone and Rachel Gubbins, followed by a roundtable discussion at the dining room table. This was an excellent opportunity to share Adelaide's story and the story of Women's Institutes. Joining me at the table were Linda Zelem, Ontario FWIC representative; past FWIC President Margaret Byl; and St. George WI members Mary Derbyshire, Jane Morrison, Joyce Monkhouse, and Kay Taylor, who together contributed many years of work on the local committee providing resources and support.

Mayor Bailey used the opportunity to emphasize the significance of the Homestead to the County of Brant, and together, we discussed the ongoing challenges FWIC faces in covering the Homestead's expenses. The Lieutenant Governor was sympathetic to the difficulties the Homestead faces, and we are cautiously optimistic that something will come from this visit. At the very least, the Homestead is receiving additional favorable press coverage. A

family, recently hearing about the Homestead, visited and sent a comment stating that this was a beautiful, peaceful landscape, with a fascinating little museum. Hopefully, we will receive more such comments.

All ready for a tea party!

Veronica, Lynn, and Rachel – represented the Adelaide Hunter Hoodless Homestead at the recent visit of the Ontario Lieutenant Governor.

Welcome back Veronica and Rachel! They were part of the 2024 staff at the Homestead.





Front row seated - Margaret Byl, Kay Taylor, Joyce Monkhouse
Standing: Linda Zelem, Lynn MacLean, Mayor Bailey, Her Honor Edith Dumont, Jane Morrison, and Mary Derbyshire.



Marching in with the piper!



Adelaide Hunter Hoodless Rose



FWIC President Lynn MacLean, Mayor of Brant County David Bailey, and Lieutenant Governor Edith Dumont

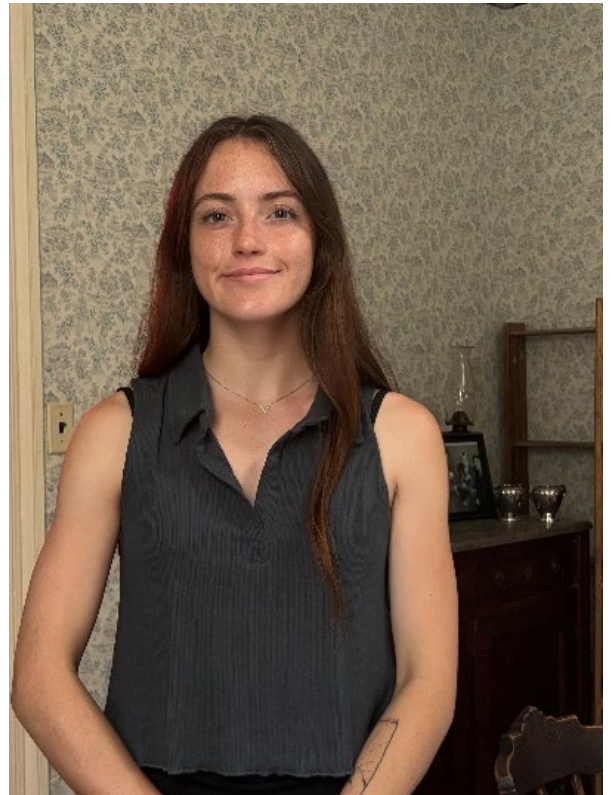
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Homestead Report

Hello all! My name is Veronica, I'm 22 years old, and recently graduated from Wilfrid Laurier University with a degree in Archaeology and Heritage Studies. I began working at the Adelaide Hunter Hoodless Homestead last summer through the Young Canada Works program, and I'm thrilled to be back in the same role this year as a Museum and Archival Assistant. From the moment I started, I felt at home. This position has given me invaluable hands-on experience—cataloging and curating artifacts, engaging with the local community, and sharing my passion for both history and social activism.



Although I officially joined the team just last year, my connection to the community and the Homestead runs much deeper. I grew up in Harrisburg, just 15 minutes away, and attended St. George German Elementary School and Paris District High School. I've known about the Homestead since I was around 10 years old, having attended music and theatre workshops, Easter at Addie's events, and participating in the Brant County 4-H club that painted the Homestead barn quilt in 2014.



This place has quickly become incredibly meaningful to me, and I'm so excited to be a part of its future!



Hello! My name is Rachel, I am 26 years old, and I am a Summer Student at the Adelaide Hunter Hoodless Homestead! I am currently entering my third year at Trent University, where I am studying Anthropology with a major in Biological Anthropology. In short, I study the bones and remains of our ancient ancestors! I grew up in St. George, attended St. George German Public School and Paris District High School. I currently live in Peterborough for my University studies. I am back in town for the summer to work here at the Homestead, as the connection to my community always draws me back home.

The Homestead has always been a warm and welcoming environment, and I am beyond thrilled to be a part of it! I previously volunteered at the Homestead during my elementary school days and have always been fond of the place, feeling a strong connection. I had the opportunity to work for the museum and the FWIC last summer, for which I am thankful for the opportunity! I have always had a love for history and learning new things that are of historic importance. While working at the museum, I get to meet wonderful new people and make amazing new connections. I am ecstatic to see where this establishment will go in the future, and I can't wait to meet everyone along the way!

Gifts to the Adelaide Hunter Hoodless Homestead

We are delighted to acknowledge two donations to the Adelaide Hunter Hoodless Homestead from:

The Charles Sherman and Robina Martin Foundation

The John S. and Sandra J. Martin Foundation.

These gifts will be used to help cover the Homestead's operating expenses.

We thank these foundations for their support.

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Adelaide Hunter Hoodless Canadian Woman of the Year 2025

The 2025 recipient of the Adelaide Hunter Hoodless Canadian Woman of the year is Louise MacLeod, a lifelong member and leader of the Women's Institute in Prince Edward Island. In fact, her volunteering and community leadership span seven decades. She has held all positions in the branch, written the branch history, and was a leader when the branch acquired the local school, renovating it to become the Community Center which is now considered to be the heart of this rural community.

Louise's infectious leadership style draws others to her cause and makes people want to be a part of whatever she is doing. She is devoted to her community, yet she does not look for glory and often downplays her efforts. Louise does so much for so many and asks for nothing in return.

In addition to her WI activities, Louise has been strongly involved in the wider community, including as a member of the PEI Advisory Board for the Status of Women, the PEI EI Appeals Board, as well as numerous historic boards. Louise was also a leader in the district 4H program and is a registered nurse.

FWIC is pleased to award the Adelaide Hunter Hoodless Canadian Woman of the Year to Louise MacLeod from the Uigg Kinross-Grandview WI branch.





This month, as part of the Sustainable Style Project, we have a skit for you to try at your Branch meeting, and... A version of the 4-H Sewing Project Wardrobe Inventory.

Both are meant to be fun and an informative approach to our FWIC National Project. As you use them in your groups, please let us know how you make out. Good Luck!

Sustainable Style Skit for Monthly Meeting

Cast:	Secretary-	Helen
	Member-	Annette
	Member-	Win
	President-	Linda

Linda:

Good day everyone – Today I want to tell you about the new FWIC Project – Sustainable Style. It is the national project for 2024-2027 and it is multi-faceted. There are six aspects to it. They are...

1. Quality Over Quantity: Sustainable closet ideas
2. Ethical Choices: Support ethically produced products
3. Health and Well-being: How our clothing impacts our well-being
4. Environmental Impact: Ethical footprints on the planet
5. Reduction of Waste: Impact of microplastics and the 7 R's
6. Action: Resolutions & Activities

Helen: Well, this must be some of the information that came through the e-mails. It looks like a lot of reading to me.

Linda: There is a lot that goes with the project for sure, yet it is designed for WI Branches to use as much or as little as they wish.

Win: Well, what's it all about Linda – in the short version?

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Linda: Sustainable Style- as the national FWIC project... it is about how we as women choose to spend our fashion wardrobe dollars wisely and mindfully. All with our society and environment in mind.

Annette: Well, that won't involve me much. I haven't bought any new clothes since 2004. I'm not a shopper you know.

Win: Me neither. If I buy anything it is usually at a yard sale of secondhand store.

Linda: That's awesome girls! Too often we shop for 'retail therapy' or to be in the latest trends. And those latest trends are killing our planet and our pocketbooks.

Helen: So, what will we have to do for this project, Linda? Are there any commitments we need to meet?

Linda: It is up to our branch what we choose to participate in. We can pick and choose our focus once we learn more about the options.

Win: Sounds like a lot of homework and reading to me!

Annette: I don't have time for that. Count me out.

Helen: Oh dear. I'm sorry Linda, I don't think that Brockway WI will be able to participate.

Linda: Well, that is our choice to make together – but before we do, I'd like us to answer a couple of short questions. Could we try that?

Win, Annette, Helen: Oh yes, Sure, why not?

Linda to ask Quiz Questions...

1. What percentage of our wardrobes, on average, do we wear on a regular basis throughout the year?
- a) 40 %
 - b) **20 % (correct answer)**
 - c) 70 %

2. How many kilograms of textiles are thrown away each year in Canada? This includes clothing, shoes, and household linens.

- a) **500 million kilograms (500,000 metric tons) (correct answer)**
- b) 250 million kilograms (250,000 metric tons)
- c) 100 million kilograms (100,000 metric tons)

85 % of the textiles thrown away in Canada end up in landfills. Only 1% of textiles worldwide are recycled. Used clothing worldwide amounts to about 700,00 tons yearly. What does not sell at Thrift stores or other used clothing stores is shipped overseas, usually to poorer countries.

Win: Well, now that we have heard the quiz questions, I had no idea how harmful the fashion industry could be to our planet.

Helen: That's right, Win. I wonder how we could help.

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Linda: Well, one of the easiest ways to help is consider the new 7Rs for recycling.

Annette: You mean reduce, reuse, and recycle?

Linda: Well, sort of. Annette. But because we have become such a wasteful and throw away society the 3Rs have become the 7Rs now.

Win: Well, that's news to me. I never heard tell of 7 Rs. What are they?

Linda: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Rethink, Refuse, Repair, Repurpose

Win: Well, I feel kind of think we should DO something as a WI branch for our community.

Annette: Yes, maybe we should try to do something – but what?

Helen: What does FWIC suggest?

Win: I'm sorry...I'm a little lost here. Who and what is FWIC?

Linda: FWIC is the Federated Women's Institutes of Canada and also called WI Canada. It is our national WI organization, and they act as a unifying voice for all the provincial WIs. This national project was chosen by all the provinces together.

Annette: So - do they have ideas for what we can do in connection with Sustainable Style?

Linda: Yes, they do. There is a list and a booklet outlining ideas and information. One great one is to sponsor an information session on the 7Rs. And another would be making a throw quilt from recycled materials for homeless shelters or food banks.

Win: Well, shoot-why don't we hold a clothing exchange and whatever is left over we can take to the food bank.

Helen: But what if we get overcome with donations? What would we do then?

Annette: We could just limit items. Say maybe 2 bags per person maximum?

Win: We really won't know till we start. I think we should try it and see what happens. It's not much different than having a yard sale.

Annette: Yeah, and yard sales are a lot of work!

Helen: Well, at our age, anything is a lot of work...but do we think the people of our community would enjoy this idea of a clothing exchange?

Linda: Yes – I think they would!

Helen: Then I make a motion that we give it a try!

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Win: And I second the motion!

Linda: Well, thank you both. Now let's consider the details...

4-H Clothing Club Wardrobe Planner

Here's a **4-H Clothing Club Wardrobe Planner** designed to guide youth through building a thoughtful, practical, and expressive wardrobe—whether for daily wear, special events, or project work. This planner blends the values of 4-H (head, heart, hands, and health) with lessons in style, budgeting, and self-expression. We thought it would be a great exercise for WI too!

1. What's in My Closet?

Make a quick inventory of what you already have. Use tally marks or list favorite items.

Tops (T-shirts, blouses, sweaters): _____

Bottoms (pants, skirts, shorts): _____

Dresses or jumpsuits: _____

Outerwear (jackets, coats): _____

Footwear: _____

Accessories (hats, scarves, jewelry): _____

Special occasion wear: _____

My Most-Worn Items:

2. My Style & Needs

Occasions I need clothes for:

- ☐ Everyday (school, home, work)
- ☐ Farm or chores
- ☐ Sports / clubs
- ☐ Church or meetings
- ☐ Special events

Words that describe my style:

(e.g., sporty, classic, colorful, simple, vintage)

Favorite colours or patterns:

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3. Wardrobe Goals

What do I want my clothes to say about me?

What clothing skills am I learning this year?

- ☐ Sewing
 - ☐ Mending
 - ☐ Shopping smart
 - ☐ Coordinating outfits
 - ☐ Sustainable choices
 - ☐ Accessorizing
-

4. Mix & Match Planning

Choose 3–5 tops and 2–3 bottoms that go together in different ways.

Draw or list combinations below.

Top 1: _____ + **Bottom 1:** _____

Top 2: _____ + **Bottom 2:** _____

Top 3: _____ + **Bottom 1 or 2:** _____

Top 4: _____ + skirt or jeans: _____

This section can also be done with fabric swatches, or photos!

5. Smart Spending

Budget for the year: \$ _____

Items I need or want:

_____ (\$ _____)
_____ (\$ _____)
_____ (\$ _____)

Could I:

Make it myself?

Buy it second-hand?

Borrow or swap with a sibling or friend?

6. Reflecting on Values

What matters to me when I choose clothing?

- ☐ Comfort
- ☐ How I feel in it
- ☐ How it's made (ethics/sustainability)
- ☐ How many ways I can wear it
- ☐ If it fits with my lifestyle

This year I want to:

- ☐ Build confidence in my style
- ☐ Learn how to care for my clothes
- ☐ Reduce clothing waste

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WI Connections Contributions

All contributions are welcome.

Please send to wiconnections@fwic.ca jpeg and png photos, which are ideal, along with Word documents or emailed messages. Sorry, PDF documents do not format well. Please avoid formatting such as indenting, formatted numbers, and bulleting. Thank you for your interest in telling about WI in your 'neck of the woods.'

To contact the FWIC president, email Lynn MacLean at president@fwic.ca or call her cell at 902 759 4755.
Lynn lives in Nova Scotia.

To contact the president-elect, email Angela at president-elect@fwic.ca, 506-277-6340
Angela lives in New Brunswick.

FWIC WI CANADA YOUTUBE CHANNEL



This is to advise that the following events are now available on the FWIC- WI Canada YouTube Channel.
They include:

- (1) WI Day 2025 – both parts
- (2) Advocacy Part 2 March 7, 2025
- (3) Earth Day Presentation about the FWIC Project
- (4) 2025 AGM with Wen Shen's presentation

To access the channel, open YouTube on any device, and in the search bar, type in FWIC WI Canada. Scroll down until you find the FWIC crest (shown below). Click on the symbol, and it will show the videos we have published.



Apple Cheddar Biscuits, submitted by Debra Barrett, Manitoba Women's Institute

Ingredients

- 1 and $\frac{3}{4}$ cups of all purpose flour
- 4 tsp baking powder
- 1 Tbsp white sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup cold butter in chunks
- 1 cup shredded extra-old cheddar cheese
- 1 cup grated cored and peeled Royal Gala or Granny Smith apples
- 2 green onions, chipped very fine
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup milk

Directions

- 1- In large bowl whisk together flour, baking powder, sugar and salt.
- 2- Using a pastry blender or 2 knives cut in the butter until the mixture looks like coarse crumbs.
- 3- Stir in cheese, apple and green onions.
- 4- Stir in milk to form a dough. Do not knead the dough or biscuits will be tough.
- 5- Drop dough by large scoop onto parchment paper line baking sheet about 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches apart.
- 6- Bake in a 425F (220C) oven until lightly browned, approximately 13 to 15 minutes.



Call for Stories... 100 Voices: The Stories That Shape Us

Dear Women's Institute Members and Friends,

We believe *every woman has a story*—and that when we share those stories, we help one another find our voices, strengthen our communities, and inspire positive change. This year, the Federated Women's Institutes of Canada (FWIC) is launching “**100 Voices: Stories That Shaped Us**,” a national storytelling initiative that will roll out as a continuing series of member spotlights on our official Facebook page. We would love to feature *your* story.

What We're Asking For

We invite you to submit a short-written story of **3–4 paragraphs** (roughly 300–500 words) **plus one photo if possible**. Your story can be informal and conversational—think of it as sitting in a circle with friends, passing wisdom, laughter, and lessons from lived experience.

Not sure where to start? We've prepared a set of **story prompts** (below). Choose one that resonates—or follow your own angle. Stories about everyday life are as valuable as big milestone moments.

How Your Story Will Be Used

Submissions will be shared as individual Facebook posts (or short series) across FWIC's national platforms. We will tag or acknowledge your local Branch/Province to help build connection and pride across the WI network. If we receive more stories than we can post immediately, we'll schedule them over time and may also include some in newsletters, web features, or future publications.

Submission Checklist

- **Your Story:** 3–4 paragraphs (300–500 words). Plain text in the body of the email is perfect. Word doc attachments also welcome.
- **Title or Prompt Chosen:** (e.g., “From Aprons to Action,” “The Recipe That Brought Our Town Together,” “My First WI Meeting,” etc.)
- **Photo (Optional but Encouraged):** JPG or PNG. Landscape (horizontal) preferred. smartphone photos are fine.
- **Your Name & WI Affiliation:** Include Branch, District/Area (if applicable), and Province.
- **Contact Email (not published):** In case we need to follow up.
-

Where to Send Your Story

Email to: President-Elect@fwic.ca or to President@fwic.ca

Timing & Deadlines

We're gathering stories on a rolling basis. Please send yours as soon as possible. If you already have a story you've written in the past (newsletter article, tribute, memory, recipe story, farm journal entry)—feel free to adapt it and send it along!

Story Prompts (Pick One—or Create Your Own!)

Below are prompts grouped by theme. Use these as writing starters; you don't need to answer every question. Choose one, combine a couple, or use them to jog your memory.

1. Finding Your Voice

- Tell us about a time you spoke up—for yourself, your family, or your community—because of something you learned through WI.

2. From Aprons to Action (Tradition Meets Change)

- Share a practical skill (sewing, canning, mending, bread baking) that you learned at WI. It may have become a way to outreach, leadership, or community service.
- How do traditional “homestead” skills still matter today? We are thinking here of the Sustainable Style Project.

3. The Recipe That Connects Us

1. A favourite family or community recipe from your WI group—what’s the story behind it?
2. When do you serve it? Who taught it to you? Did it travel across generations or cultures?
3. Include a photo of the dish, handwritten recipe card, or family gathering if available.

4. Everyday Leadership

- A small act as a result of being a WI Member that made a big difference: driving someone to an appointment, organizing school lunches, hosting a community tea.
- How do “small” things become community change?

5. Sustainable Style / Slow Living

- Tell us about buying fewer, better things; mending; swapping; or creating a capsule wardrobe.
- How does mindful consumption reflect WI values of stewardship and care?
- Include a photo (a favourite well-loved garment, a mending kit, or before/after closet edit!).

6. Intergenerational Moments

- A conversation with a grandmother, daughter, niece, mentee, or new neighbour that taught you something important.
- What wisdom was passed along as a result of WI? What surprised you?

7. A Place That Holds Memory

- Describe a farm kitchen, community hall, field, shoreline, or backyard garden that shaped you.
- What happened there? Why does it matter now?

8. When We Came Together

- A Branch project that rallied people: fundraiser, emergency relief, quilt project, literacy drive, community garden.
- What was the need? Who showed up? What did you learn about working together?

9. Firsts & Fresh Starts

- Your first WI meeting—what did you expect vs. what did you find?
- A time you joined (or rejoined) community after a move, illness, or life change.

10. Open Prompt – Tell Us Anything!

- What do you wish more people knew about WI today?
- What are you most proud of in your journey?
- How has belonging shaped your confidence, friendships, or skills?

Quick Writing Guide (3–4 Paragraph Structure)

Here’s an easy way to shape your story:

Paragraph 1 – The Hook: A moment, memory, or vivid image. (“The smell of strawberry jam filled the kitchen the day I realized...”)

Paragraph 2 – The Story: What happened? Who was there? What challenge or decision did you face?

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Paragraph 3 – Meaning/Reflection: What did you learn? How did it shape your voice, values, or community involvement?

Paragraph 4 – Invitation or Takeaway: Encourage readers—"Have you ever...?" "Here's one small way to start..." or a short, hopeful wish for the future. Shorter is okay! If you only write 3 paragraphs, combine the last two.

Sample Mini-Story (for Inspiration)

The first thing you notice in our community hall is the row of gingham tablecloths—each one stitched by a different member across three generations. When we hold a coffee party or afternoon tea, we always decorate the tables with all of the cross-stitched tablecloths. Set on each table is a vase of wildflowers and in July the black eyed Susans are perfect to go along with a cookie or muffin for refreshment. I am so glad I belong to WI, it's a place to go where I always feel welcomed, and I know I will always learn something new and have a good time!

Ready? Send Your Story!

We can't wait to hear from you and share your voice with others across Canada and beyond. Together we can celebrate the everyday leadership, creativity, resilience, and heart that define Women's Institutes. As you know, each province and the Homestead wants to get the word out about WI to encourage participation in rural Canada. Since we have NO money to buy fancy ads or TV spots, this is one way we think we can publicize WIs and the difference we make in communities. Please consider participating today, we would truly appreciate your enthusiasm and support.

With gratitude and excitement,

Angela - Communications & Outreach Chair (506-277-6340)

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This photo was taken at the Quebec Historical Site. This rose was planted at the QWI Historical Site to celebrate FWIC's 100th Anniversary and is full of flowers once again this summer.

Pat Clarke, QWI

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This & That, submitted by Elizabeth Rushton, Alberta Women's Institute

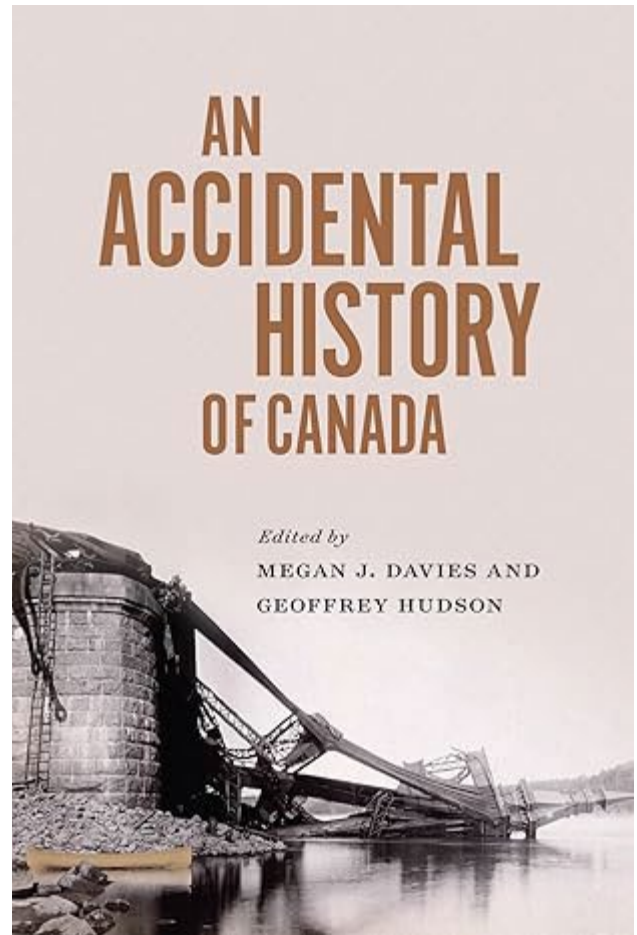
An Accidental History of Canada

Have you ever picked up a book at your local library and, in spite of reading the description of its contents and thinking it sounds interesting, only to find when you pick it up at home it really wasn't what you expected? That happened to me recently when I picked up a new book titled *An Accidental History of Canada* and found it was a far more in depth look at various types of accidents since the early years, set amongst the thinking and reporting of the day. Each chapter has at least 2 to 3 pages of footnotes, showing how many hundreds of hours must have been spent researching archives, newspapers, coroner's inquests, royal commission reports, court cases and more.

It is not my intention to write a book review but rather to draw this book to your attention as one chapter highlights the British Columbia Women's Institutes and how they responded to the needs of a young girl whose back had been injured when falling onto rocks while playing and was later discovered to have TB in her spine. The Hornby Island WI branch, where she lived with her family responded to her case and shortly after a provincial fund for disabled children was established by the BCWI. To this day they still support this cause. This is all set in the times in which it began, the 1920s, and some of the comments about the WI reflect those times " ... *for by the 1920s the BC Women's Institute were a strong middle-class maternalistic voice for promoting health and social care for the settlers' families, particularly in the province's rural regions.*" I did wish that the author had used the word 'branch' rather than 'chapter' but after detailing the involvement of the WI, it goes on to document the subsequent development of care for disabled children across the province.

The book addresses fires, the mining industry, medical malpractice, cycling accidents in Vancouver, bridge building failures, the history of the Grenfell Mission and the fishing industry in Newfoundland and Labrador, establishment of Workmen's Compensation, canoe and logging safety on the Petawawa River in Ontario and beyond, early shipwrecks, indigenous experiences, childhood disability and rehabilitation and kitchen table surgery. This book brings together original studies stretching from the 1630s to the 1970s. The cover of the book shows the Quebec Bridge after a span fell during construction in 1907, killing 75 men.

Would I recommend this book? Well, it's certainly not your typical summertime read, but as I skimmed the early chapters to pick out just the reports of various disasters, I somehow found myself reading more in depth and learning how safety measures and regulations evolved in so many industries, how newspaper reports of various accidents changed over the years and even that none of the recommendations of the final report of a Royal Commission on the Relations of Capital and Labour published in 1889 were directly implemented, except for the creation of the federal Labour Day holiday. I have to admit I had never thought about how or when Labour Day originated so I found that tidbit interesting!



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Marie Kenny, ACWW Canada Area President



Greetings everyone, I hope this finds you well. The summer months certainly

are flying by, and I do hope that you are taking time to enjoy the longer days. Here on PEI, we have had a spring of very rapid growth, followed by numerous days of extreme heat so far this summer and in this area a minimum amount of rain. All this may certainly add to food insecurity nationally.

Addressing Food insecurity is part of the work of ACWW as numerous resolutions have been passed addressing this global issue. ACWW funds development projects which improve rural communities and contribute to the effective lobbying and advocacy to support rural women.

The most recent ACWW project under the Climate Smart Agriculture Focus Area. The Climate Smart Agriculture Project of June 2024 is a grant for the Women's Organization for Rural Development (WORD) - Funded in June 2024 with a grant of £7,444. A core area of focus for Women's Organization for Rural Development (WORD) is the promotion of sustainable agriculture among farming communities to create sustainable livelihoods, improve soil health and the environment and contribute to the overall wellbeing of all living things.

The project, which is planned to last for 12 months, will reach 50 Dalit women living across five villages in Namakkal District, Tamil Nadu. Participants will attend training in sustainable horticulture methods utilizing indigenous crops. They will attend intensive training sessions, field demonstrations and farmer field schools. Indigenous seeds will be distributed include okra, aubergine, chilies, gourds and greens. They will also be provided with organic farm inputs including herbal pesticides, crop tonics and fertilizer. There will also be seed collection sessions so that farmers can create their own seed banks for future use and to share with other farmers. The participants of this project already own small plots of land, around a quarter of an acre, which will enable them to implement the training in sustainable agriculture they have received effectively. For many participants, this land is being underutilized to raise cattle or other grazers rather than grow profitable crops. This project will empower the women to invest in the health of the soil to cultivate a sustainable income from their land.

Women's Organization for Rural Development (WORD) was founded in 1991 by group of social workers who were followers of Mahatma Gandhi and Vinoba Bhave, pioneers of the Bhoodan Movement to distribute excess land owned by landowners to the landless laborers. WORD focuses on women empowerment, enabling women to become socially and economically empowered. WORD strives to empower small and marginal farmers with economic aid, sustainable and eco-friendly agricultural techniques and practices. Encouraging farmers to collect, preserve, store seeds, especially indigenous seeds, and share seeds and expertise with fellow farmers. Enabling grassroots women, adolescents, youth to acquire employable individuals in future and create them as micro level business entrepreneurs. Ending all age-old practices, customs against women, children.

Thank you for supporting the ACWW Rural Women in Action fund which enables project like this one to be possible. Every dollar counts and ACWW appreciates your generous gifts large or small. This project and numerous others will be highlighted during the ACWW Triennial Conference in Ottawa, which is now only ten months away.

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Early Bird registrations deadline is August 31, 2025. Check the ACWW website for full registration details. I look forward to seeing you there!

~Attention~

**31st Triennial World Conference Attendees
April 26 - May 2, 2026
Have you registered for ACWW Conference 2026?**

**Do you need a room mate?
Looking for a travel buddy?
Or just want to connect with other attendees across
Canada.**

**Early Bird registration until August 31.
All registration closes Oct 31.**

**Contact Donna Henderson
donna_ross_h@yahoo.ca**

