

Westfort Women's Institute fonds

Original, 22 cm of textual records, 1937-2005.

Scope and Content:

Series E 46/1/1-4 - Tweedsmuir Histories - 15 cm - 1942-2005 (originals).

The Tweedsmuir History Books that form the bulk of this fonds were begun in 1942 and record the history of West Fort William and the activities of the Institute itself. Records include three volumes of Tweedsmuir histories. Information was gathered by the members under the direction of the Convener of Historical Research of the Institute. Includes pages of remembrance, photographs, a history of the Institute, and many aspects of local history with special emphasis on schools, health, churches and industry. Includes membership rolls. Volume 1 (1942-1959); volume 2 (1957-1981); volume 3 (1981-1996), Volume 4 (1970, 1984-2005).

Series E 46/2/1-2 - Accounts - 3 cm - 1937-1966 (originals).

- 1) Cashbook, 1937-1955
- 2) Record of receipts and expenditures

Series E 46/3/1 - Minutes - 2 cm - 1983-1987 (originals).

Minute book containing a records of financial affairs for 1983-1987. Includes list of officers and directors as well as a record of attendance at meetings.

Series E 46/4/1 - Programs and Booklets - 2 cm - 1957-1979 (originals).

14 programs or booklets dealing with celebrations of churches, schools, libraries in Fort William and Thunder Bay.

Administrative Sketch:

The Westfort Women's Institute was founded in 1919 and remains in existence in 1999. The first Women's Institute was founded in 1897 in Saltfleet Township, Ontario, in the village of Stoney Creek. It grew out of an address given by Adelaide Hoodless on the value of having domestic science and sewing taught in the public schools. Women at the meeting felt the need to form an institute to assist them in their works at homemaking and in their responsibilities towards their families. Their aim was to "improve conditions in the home from the physical, intellectual and cultural standpoints," to "raise the standard of homemaking." By 1900 there were 33 branches and a membership of 1,602; by 1940 this had grown to 1,391 branches and 40,300 members. The members were encouraged by the interest taken in their affairs by Lady Tweedsmuir, wife of Canada's Governor-General. She especially encouraged Institutes to take an interest in recording the histories of their communities. Thus began the Tweedsmuir History books. Gradually from the 1950s onward, membership in the institutes waned. In the 1970s and beyond, branches were rapidly folding.

Additional Information:

Related material - See also library stacks for Annie Walker, *Fifty Years of Achievement*.