

15 The South Salt Spring Island Women's Institute  
are selling tickets on a quilt which is to be  
raffled at the Fall Fair.

It's colourful, carefully stitched, and is the  
work of many members. This is ~~the year~~ 1978, but the  
same announcement could have been made over fifty years  
ago when Mrs. Carolyn Gyves first suggested making a  
quilt and raffling it to ~~raise money~~ raise money. ~~THE~~

The women wanted to build a hall and funds were  
needed. Members at that time were meeting in the Bur-  
goyne Valley School and plans were being made to have a  
meeting place of their own where classes could be held  
in home canning and other domestic arts; and the commun-  
ity could socialize. As well as quilt raffling, the wom-  
en's fund-raising efforts included card parties, dances  
and a door-to-door canvass.

The land for the hall was given by the Shaw family,  
whose farm ~~was on the site of today's airstrip~~  
~~included~~ included the site of today's airstrip. Trees for lumber  
were donated, volunteers lined up to help in construction,  
and a building bee was organized. Of course a "bee" meant  
a banquet for the workers, and of course the Women's In-  
stitute provided the food. Soon they had a building for  
everyone to use - the Fulford Institute Hall. Unfortunatel-  
ly it had a short life, <sup>before</sup> being lost to fire. ~~in 1936~~.

Once again the members of the Institute were spend-  
ing their free time fund-raising for the building of an-  
other hall. Most of the women lived on farms and had long

days - making butter, tending children and animals, and preparing barrels of pork and beef for the winter, as well as running their homes and tending their gardens. Time was found though to help raise funds and make plans for a second hall. This building was enjoyed for a few years longer than the first ~~one~~ one, <sup>until</sup> ~~before~~ <sup>when</sup> in 1936, it also burnt down.

The present Fulford Hall was an ambitious community undertaking. Much discussion took place about finances, with some arguing that the community bank balance of \$ 2400 was insufficient to complete the project. When the building was rough finished, they had exactly \$ 8 left in this account! A carpenter, Jack Graham, was hired to oversee the building. He first made the doors and window frames as a donation and later took the rest on as a paying job. The sturdiness (and weight) of the roof beams <sup>he used</sup> is still remembered by one of the volunteers.

Once again the Women's Institute played its part, and over the years the hall, which is its present form is suitable for sports, dances, concerts, ~~and many other~~ plays, movies and meetings of all kinds, was built, as funds could be found.

Over the years the focus ~~of~~ of the S.S.W.I.'s activities had changed. When the group first met the First World War had just ended, and servicemen were back home settling with young wives who were for the

most part not accustomed to rural life. At that time the members exchanged ideas and offered classes. The meetings also ~~xxxxxx~~ served as a social outlet for women who were fairly isolated otherwise. Probably the organization made coping with island life a bit easier to accept. At one time they sponsored Well Baby Clinics which the Government Health Unit in Ganges now handles.

Today, 58 years after the South Salt Spring Women's Institute was inaugurated, members meet in homes, and observe their motto: "For Home and Country." Mrs. Carolyn Gyves, who suggested the quilt making years ago, ~~xxxxxx~~ has the distinction of being the only remaining Charter Member and, to judge from the minutes of past meetings she has, over the years been a very active one. The women of the Institute are today, as always, willing to help their neighbours.