

**Name of Branch:** Annie Wood(s) Women's Institute

**Location:** Olds

**Organized:** Jan. 16, 1952; they celebrate their 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary at the end of 1962 [Minute book 1961-62, Jan., 1962 minutes p. 113]

**Charter Members:** Mrs. L. Latimer, Mrs. A. Wier, Mrs. H.R. Bell, Mrs. V. Calwell, Mrs. A. Fraser, Mrs. J. Pedersen, Mrs. O. Hansen, Mrs. Wm. Melhorne, Mrs. H. Upham, Mrs. H. Randers, Mrs. E. Petersen, Mrs. Hanne Christensen, Mrs. L. Doherty

**First Executive:** Mrs. L. Latimer, pres; Mrs. A. Wier, first vice-pres; Mrs. H.R. Bell, sec-trea; directors: Mrs. V. Calwell, Mrs. A. Fraser, Mrs. J. Pedersen



**Disbanded:** April, 1963. The decision to disband a branch was always difficult emotionally. Here is how the Annie Wood WI finally decided to disband.

In July 1961, the branch was experiencing low turn-out to meetings, as low as 7 people. Because of the logistics, someone moved that they abandon the giving of papers. This was turned into a roll call for September: "How to Improve our WI."

This exercise brought interesting results: 1) decision to give the papers more importance by having them earlier in the meeting so they could be properly discussed; 2) that members be on time so that meetings would start earlier and cover more; 3) organize some of the paper topics so that they were part of roll call - then all the members could participate in the paper; 4) find more members; 5) make more money through card parties and food sales; 6) make a crazy quilt. The Annie Wood WI then discussed the future of their WI and resolved to send out a plea to all members to attend the next meeting to vote on important matters.

In Oct 1961, the ten members present voted to discontinue the papers after all; instead, they decided to make another quilt out the remnants of the last quilt. In November, they received a letter from Mrs. M.G. Roberts of the National Farm Radio Forum. No one wanted to participate.

1963 on a vote 8 yes to 1 no. "The future of our organization was discussed. No one wants to hold the offices. So no officers were appointed." They still make plans for their Jan. 13 banquet and where and when the January meeting would be held. Then the Minutes recorded the sad hope that they would, "Try to get a few more members to carry on with..." Ultimately, the January meeting was held as planned and the only thing on the agenda was the vote to dissolve.

**Activities:** Even in the 1961-62 Minute Book, which was their last year, the Annie Wood WI is busy doing what it has always done. At the January meeting, the Sec-Treas reported that they had a bank balance of \$25.88. A letter of thanks was noted from the Mental Health Association for gifts sent to Oliver Hospital. A letter from provincial President asked them to send in recommendations for safety on school buses. The WI was approached by the Chamber of Commerce to see if it and other organizations would be willing to take over the running of the Community Lounge for a year. Their response was that they needed more information; then, at their next meeting, they voted a \$10 donation to the Lounge. They were working on a quilt and looking for a suitable time and place for a food sale. They were going to have a card party with one person donating the "low" prizes and one the "high" prizes (\$1 each). Everyone was to bring lunch. They invited the Home Economist to speak on kitchen management and storage and general housekeeping. And they received a letter from the Olds Municipal Library asking for a donation; they sent \$5.00.

The branch had at this time only 11 members, which possibly explains the lack of energy in this branch. When numbers dipped this low, everyone had to wear too many committee hats, and people simply got tired.

**Sources:** *Olds: A History of Olds and Area*. Olds, AB: Olds History Committee, 1980. 387; PAA 91.3041.150. Minute Book Annie Wood WI 1961-62; PAA 2007.0380/55 Box 2. AWI Branches Vol.1.