

The 5th Annual Rural Women's Day celebrated at Heffley Creek Hall



Former Lieutenant-Governor Judith Guichon presented with a life quilt from BC Women's Institute (l-r) Janet Bangs, Vanderhoof, BCWI past president, Honable Judith Guichon, Cathy Inskip, Overlander WI President and BCWI director, Anne Dunn and Gladys Haines, Overlander WI members, Wanda Mason, New Hazelton, BCWI director.



L-r) BC Women's Institute members Mary Smith and Carol Patton enjoying the delicious tea put on by the Overlanders Womens Institute at the Heffley Creek Hall on Oct 29. Jill Hayward photo:

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The 5th Annual ACWW World Rural Women's Day was celebrated last Monday at the Heffley Creek Community Hall and was hosted by The Overlander Women's Institute, a member of the British Columbia Women's Institute (BCWI).

Special guest for the event was Judith Guichon, the former Lieutenant-Governor of British Columbia.

Officials and guests also seated at the head table included Lynda Krupp representing MP Cathy McLeod, Kamloops Deputy Mayor Tina Lange, Colleen Hooper BCWI president from Aldergrove, BCWI past-president Janet Bangs from Vanderhoof, BCWI director Wanda Mason from New Hazelton, BCWI office administrator Betty Bartlett from Barriere, BCWI historian Ruth Fenner from Vancouver Island, and Overlander Women's Institute president Cathy Inskip.

The Heffley Creek Hall was filled with women of all ages, youngsters and even a few men were in attendance.

The Overlander WI ladies did an amazing job of decorating and setting the tables, and then serving a tasty and eye pleasing tea that was enjoyed by all.

Overlander Women's Institute president Cathy Inskip served as the MC for the event stating, "The money we raise today will not only benefit the lives of some of the most disadvantaged women all over the world, but also their families and communities. Let's raise awareness for these important projects and help women less fortunate than ourselves.

"Associated Country Women of the World (ACWW) is one of the largest development organizations for rural women, working with 412 member societies and affiliates to represent more than 9 million women in 77 countries worldwide. Through cooperation and understanding we empower women to exercise more power and change their own lives for the better. We engage with, and advocate for, women at local, national and international levels."

She noted that the ACWW has helped women in South Africa with a solar pump for clean water accessible in their communities, and last year ACWW helped women in Guatemala and Romania. The beneficiaries were women aged 15 – 25 years living around the garbage dumps of Guatemala City, who have not been able to complete their education and lack a sustainable livelihood or income with which to support their families. ACWW also women in Romania who were the victims of domestic violence.

"In both countries ACWW helped equip these women with skill and means to move forward with their lives to support themselves and their children," said Inskip, "This year ACWW has launched a new way to support projects that streamlines and yet broadens the scope of how we can support and help to empower women around the world. It is call the WE Fund – WE stands for Women Empowered."

Current priorities for funding include projects that focus on basic literacy, skills-training, income-generating businesses, organic smallholder agriculture, improved nutrition, maternal health and access to water and sanitation.

Inskip then called upon Ruth Fenner and Janet Bangs to make a special presentation to Judith Guichon of a life quilt that was created by BCWI members. Each of the quilt squares recognized some of the accomplishments of Guichon's life, including serving as Lieutenant-Governor of British Columbia; being a rancher and raising cattle; the species at risk animals that reside on her ranch and she advocates for – the badger, the burrowing owl, the

western toad; her service to the BC Cattlemen's Association; a lifelong supporter of 4-H programs and events; loving music and playing the flute; being an advocate for a healthy planet; and maintaining a home and raising her children. The life quilt was beautifully crafted, and Guichon showed her appreciation with smiles, a few tears and many thank yous.

Guichon said she was amazed at the work and workmanship that went into the quilt, and added "Thank you for compiling my life in a quilt."

Lynda Krupp, representing the Kamloops-Thompson-Cariboo Member of Parliament Cathy McLeod, then presented Guichon with a Canada 150 medal.

The winning ticket on the BCWI Provincial Raffle for BC Children's Hospital of a handmade quilt was then drawn with the quilt won by a resident of South Hazelton.

Then Gladys Haines presented Guichon with handmade quilted place mats and trivets.

Ruth Fenner spoke about a watch that had at one time belonged to famous poet Pauline Johnson and had come into the ownership of Madge Watt. After Watt passed it was decided that the watch will be going to the Metchosin Museum.

The event ended with everyone singing Happy Birthday and enjoying a very delicious cake in celebration of Overlander WI member Tomi Wayabayashi who turned 80 years old on that day.



Overlander Womens Institute member Joanne Odain pours tea for guests during the 5th Annual Rural Women's Day celebrated at Heffley Creek Hall. Jill Hayward photo



Judith Guichon, (former Lt. Gov. of B.C.) receiving a Canada 150 Medal from Linda Krupp on behalf of Kamloops-Thompson-Cariboo MP Cathy McLeod, who was in Ottawa at the time. Jill Hayward photo:

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