

Pinwherry WRI

As far as records show Pinwherry Woman's Rural Institute was formed on the 12th December 1921. Miss Hamilton from Daljarrock was President, Mrs Dunlop of Fardenreoch was Vice President and Mrs MacKinnon, Schoolhouse as Secretary. Meetings were held in the school. The hall having been turned into a creamery. No reports of the Institute can be found after the 4th July 1923.

By December 1935 minutes of a women's social club are recorded. This club was run on a similar format and with the same aims as the rural.

September 1940 was a difficult time to get speakers and demonstrators so it was agreed to hold meeting every second month. It was suggested that the club should transfer to the Scottish Women's Rural Institute and a joint meeting of both committees proposed. Sphagnum moss was gathered as dressings by Red Cross. Proceeds from the money raising events were donated to deserving causes during the war years: Red Cross, Spitfire Fund and Comfort Fund for local men serving with H.M. forces benefited. Families evacuated to Pinwherry House from Greenock were provided with black material to help with clothing.

Mrs Kennedy president of Ayrshire Federation and the secretary Miss Montgomerie attended a joint meeting in October 1940 to tell the local ladies more about the "rural" movement. The result being Mrs Grace Coltman of Daljarrock was elected President. Meetings to be held monthly with a demonstrator or a speaker, music and games with a cup of tea rounding off the evening.

Mrs Milroy "Craig cannochie!" who had been a tower of strength to both rural and social club received a token of respect from her fellow members on leaving the district.

During the 1940's baking, handicraft and homemaking competitions were introduced for members with a rose bowl to be presented annually for the winner with most points during the year. Mrs R Kerr gave a small cup for the runner-up in these competitions. She was both President and Secretary for many years, encouraging the younger members of the district and giving demonstrations including china painting.

Mrs T Hutchison on many occasions carried out the offices of President and Secretary as well as giving talks and film shows. Before her marriage she was the local district nurse.

Mrs RK Findlay (nee Boyd) was appointed as the first paid secretary of Ayrshire Federation and accompanied Mrs Agnew to our meeting in September 1952. She recalls judging the competition – a jar of jelly – by holding it up to the hanging lamp, this was before electricity had been installed in the hall. Coming to live in the district she joined the rural and served time on committee.

While President, on behalf of our Institute, a message of congratulations was sent to the Queen and Duke of Edinburgh on their Silver Wedding Anniversary. A telegram thanking Pinwherry WRI for their kind and loyal message was received by return.

Our outing in May 1956 proved to be one with a difference. Going by train with no corridor, morning tea was served through the train windows, when stopping at stations along the way. Walking between Tarbet and

Arrocher and sailing down Loch Lomond proved to be an exhausting but enjoyable day.

The following ladies have been loyal Rural members for many years and at present all serve on committee. They have in the past been office bearers:- Jean Wyllie - Vice President, President, Treasurer, Press Secretary and a member of the Federation Executive Committee and Handcraft Convener.

Beth Blain has gained many proficiency certificates in Handcraft and Housewives Tests along with Jean Wyllie who has also gained her Judges, Demonstrators and

Teachers bars for Handcrafts and her Judges bar in Housewifery skills.

Elizabeth Ferguson and Grace Dunlop both received hygiene certificates.

Many of our members have been successful with individual entries at local agricultural and horticultural shows in various sections. Team entries have also been successful in winning trophies. Elsie Milroy, Beth Blain, Rona Tait and Jean Wyllie have all won trophies at the Federation Show. In National competition Chris Haycox has won the Helen Lowe Trophy with Rona Tait, Beth Blain and Jean Wyllie all obtaining prize winning tickets.



Members visiting gardens in mid to late 50's

Back row: Mrs Drennan, Mrs Stewart

Front row: Miss Gallacher, Mrs Hutchison, Jean Wyllie (McWhirter), Morag Forsyth (Hutchison), Ella Walker (McWhirter), Helen Donald (McWhirter)

*Your friend is one who knows all about you
and still likes you.*