

Yellow Briar Chapter of IODE gives much to the community



By Makayla Pereira

In 1985 the Yellow Briar Chapter joined The Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire (IODE) network of women created in the early 1900s. Margaret Polson Murray of Montreal founded the IODE when she saw a need to recognize and support for Canadians departing to fight with the British Empire forces in South Africa.

Since 1985, Yellow Briar Chapter has been part of the network that continues to contribute to Orangeville and surrounding communities. Through fundraising and donations this group has presented the yearly grade six General Proficiency awards to our local schools, supported Choices Youth Shelter, recently donated Christmas gifts to residents at the Shelburne Residence retirement and nursing home, and provide stuffed toys and 'Furry Friends' to the Headwaters Health Care Centre's pediatric ward. Those are just a few worthy causes they have supported.

'Ms. Murray encouraged the formation of a federation of women to promote patriotism, loyalty and service to others by sending telegrams to the mayors of Canada's major cities urging them to call together the prominent women of their communities,' the IODE website says. The first chapter was formed in Fredericton, New Brunswick on January 15, 1900. A year later the head office of the IODE was relocated to Toronto.

As a not-for-profit charitable organization the IODE works towards helping any citizen in need. Recently the Yellow Briar Chapter made a donation to the Yukon to assist the IODE in building a playground there for children.

Yellow Briar Chapter member Janice Sullivan said the largest fundraiser of the year is called the 'Twelve Days of Christmas.' The mission of this event 'is to help make Canada the most literate nation in the world, which helps the children of our community,' she said.

The Twelve Days of Christmas was established in 2005 when the Yellow Briar Chapter women joined the Orangeville Public Library in working towards helping to put books in the hands of children.

'The baskets and containers are filled with donated items from local businesses, friends of the library and friends of the IODE, and for twelve days in November /December these items are displayed at the library for the public to view and participate in the silent auction by placing a bid on the item they'd like to win. With support of the community to date we have raised over 17,000 from the

300 plus baskets donated with 100% of the funds received going to the library. The children's section of Orangeville public library has been able to purchase over 1,000 books,? said Ms. Sullivan.

Ms. Sullivan was invited to join the Chapter 24 years ago. She says that after attending a couple meetings she knew it was the right fit for her. Since then she has been named the Officer of Communications and continues to help the community around her each year.

The IODE Lord Dufferin Chapter was the founding chapter in Dufferin and Caledon, and became the founder of Orangeville's first hospital, dubbed Lord Dufferin Hospital.

As of right now there is currently three IODE groups of women working to support the community. The IODE Yellow Briar Chapter came next and following that came the IODE Headwaters Chapter which was just established over two years ago.