

day a week so the women could get together and work on their projects. From the record of goods completed and shipped, it would seem that they could probably have filled a ship easily.

To further their contributions, money making schemes were hatched including teas, canvasses, lunches, concerts, pie socials, etc. Admission for concerts was adults 25¢, youngsters 15¢; dances were adults 35¢, under twelve, 25¢. Orchestra cost was \$20. There was no shortage of activities, sports events were included and there was also a Patriotic Club for salvage. One entry notes a salvage shipment of 612 lbs., value \$11.92.

In the years following, when the war was over and some of the passion and activities had subsided, it was found that most of the original members were not with us anymore. However, Mrs. Bea Outhwaite kept the spirit alive. By 1960 she had Kay Hiebert as her Girl Friday and between them they still gathered, sorted and packed donated clothing, also knitting and sewing was still going on and it was Kay's job to pass it around to willing workers, as well as seeing that it came back again. For years, Mrs. Edgar had the loan cupboard, crutches, wheelchair, canes, etc., which was passed on to Myrtle Larkin and is now discontinued. There has always been a spring canvas which has been enormously successful. The spirit must still prevail. Iverna Thomson was in charge of this until her sudden death and Vera Hay carried on for some years. It has now been passed on to Theresa Thiessen. For some time, Mrs. Outhwaite was running the organization almost single-handedly. Finally she began looking for more help and found Anne Rand was interested in Red Cross, having a background of Red Cross since the war began, in her teens at McCreary. She became President and still is. Florence Evenson agreed to the job of Secretary-Treasurer and handled it well until she left our midst.

Over the years, we ladies have been treated to a few excursions. One such occasion started with a tour of the Red Cross Centre where we witnessed blood donors giving their blood and also the room where it was being put through miles of tubing to separate its different components, which were five at that time. From there we went to Government House for lunch and a tour, and on to the Museum of Man and Nature and the Planetarium. On another occasion a carload of Austin members and some from other areas were treated to a cruise on the Paddle Wheel Princess down the Red River to Fort Garry. Those visits were very enjoyable and educational and in those days, something to write home about.

The Annual Meetings have always been special and were always attended by a carload from Austin. It was volunteers meeting volunteers from all over Manitoba with speakers from any one of the other provinces and from national headquarters, all with the same visions and goals. In days long past, the Annual

Meeting was always in Winnipeg but during the last decade or two they have been spread around the province, making a nice diversity.

Where handcrafted articles are concerned, that has changed with times. Any donations of that sort now have to be sold and the proceeds are sent towards whatever the cause may be. Shipping goods has become too expensive. Add to that the diminishing market for handcrafted goods and the reluctance of the now-generation with many more exciting things to do - time is of the essence. No more "Sit by the fire and sew", nor any more Aunt Dinah's quilting parties, or at least those activities are much downgraded.

Three or four decades ago a small creek was dammed up SW of Austin forming Hidden Valley Lake, which was equipped with a spring board, diving board and bath houses and staffed by Red Cross Youth teaching water safety, swimming and activities pertaining to water, during the summer. In later years this was carried on at Jackson's Lake and then at J.J.'s Campground and now called Shady Oaks. These lessons were enjoyed by adults as well as the younger fry.

In spite of a slowing-up process in handicrafts, the ladies can still report some fundraising via the odd bake sale, several raffles of quilts and raffle and sales of a few afghans, some knitted and some crocheted, as well as smaller articles that were sold in Crafts Galore when they were in business. Most of those were donated by local Hutterites. The knitted afghans were done by Beth Guenther who specialized in that. The total amount of services rendered was too diverse and far-reaching to be completely tabulated, as were the names of the donors, the list is too long and would take too long to pursue, which is very unfortunate. However, awards come sooner or later. In February of 1988 an Awards Night was organized in appreciation for our canvassers, when they were presented with citations and service pins with their names inscribed on the back. This took place at the Drop-In Centre with displays of yesteryear on the walls and tables, along with a video and a quilt raffle and articles created by volunteers, on display. And then there is Anne Rand who was nominated to receive the Queen's Commemorative Medal for the 125th Anniversary of the Confederation of Canada. This was a real honour, totally unexpected, but she is certain there are many others in the organization who are as deserving or more so - those who battled mucky roads in March during campaign time, to mention just one section. Then there are those who keep the records of activities and monies. Luckily there is always support and inspiration coming forth from our leaders.

It is certainly hoped that it will not take another war to get further volunteers involved to pick up the cause and keep the spirit alive. Unfortunately, the