

Mrs. Ethel Hagen

Mrs. Ethel Hagen (nee O'Connor), wife of Ted Hagen and the mother of four living children spent many of her years teaching in Elgin County schools. She also taught a few years in the Lucan area and the Port Dover area during World War II. Her retirement years were spent in St. Thomas.

Ethel believed in the old adage that "the way to do things is to begin." That is just what the tiny, four foot seven inch Irish colleen did! She was the first president in 1971 - 72 of the Elgin Unit of S.T.O. With some reluctance, Ethel agreed to become acting president at the April 16th, 1971, joint meeting of men and women retired teachers of Elgin. She hesitated, not because she felt inadequate, but because she was afraid that "if an S.T.O. Elgin organization was formed, the strong O.A.S.W.T. Elgin unit would lose some of its identity" (Quote from Oct. 1970 O.A.S.W.T. Elgin minutes). The male retired teachers must have cajoled her to accept the presidency by pointing out that with one organization, there was additional strength to convince government about increased pensions and decreased taxation etc.

Yes, Ethel was a poet at heart, and in the S.T.O. archives the following poem was found written in Ethel's own penmanship. She must have written it upon writing as S.T.O. president. Here it is!

Time For Change

It's been a pleasure to serve you
Friends both old and new,
You accepted my guidance 'tis true
But I sure needed each one of you.
You've been right behind me in all that was done
Some cases we lost, but others we won.
So let's give our new president a rousing cheer
To help him onward to a successful year!

Ethel Hagen died in 1991, but many of us can still vividly picture her dressed in green laughing and dancing a jig at any of our March retired teachers' meetings.

A great gal!