



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA



John H. Reimer

Member of Parliament for the
riding of Kitchener, Ontario is
pleased to congratulate

F. Duretta Wolfhard

on the occasion of
***Oktoberfest Woman of the Year
Senior***

October 15, 1992

Dated

John Reimer

**John H. Reimer, M.P.
Kitchener**



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en of the Year



Honored for achievements — The 1992 Women of the Year include (front row, left to right) Carolyn Rittinger (professional), Jennifer Louks (homemaker), Duretta Wolfhard (senior), Susan Burke (arts), Marlene Baulk (employee) and (standing, left to

right) Nancy McCreary (volunteerism), Marcia Smellie (advocacy), Kathy Doherty-Masters (sports), Judy Harding (humanitarian), Marina Kaakahdjian (youth), Joyce Palubiski (multicultural) and Bev Chris (business).

Peter Lee, Record staff

1992 Women

Dozen 'positive role models' urged to be mentors for younger women

As part of the 18th annual Oktoberfest Women of the Year Award presentations Thursday night, about 300 guests were treated to a slide show highlighting women's early achievements in Waterloo Region.

"It's a theme we have neglected," acknowledged Ken McLaughlin, vice-president and academic dean of St. Jerome's College, who was guest speaker along with John English, the University of Waterloo history professor with whom he co-authored an illustrated history of Kitchener in 1983.

The pair began their historical flashback with 1880, showing stark, black-and-white portraits of some of the 400 young women who were employed in button factories in Kitchener.

It was a time, they explained, when the pull of factory labor changed the face of society, causing — in spite of all high-school girls' training in "domestic science" — a shortage of domestic labor which was a common lament of the well-to-do.

Indeed, around 1900, 30 per cent of all manufacturing jobs in Kitchener were held by women.

Forty years later, McLaughlin said, the Second World War boom period created 7,000 industrial jobs in Kitchener, many of them also held by women.

English focused on the huge Dominion Woolens factory in Cambridge, whose demand for workers once prompted recruiters to inquire at any home where a brassiere could be spotted on the clothesline.

Young women came from across the province and from as far afield as Newfoundland to work at the mill for \$30 a week, English said, showing slides of young women "punching the clock," making tea, ironing



and, of course, working in the "hurly burly of the plant.

"The work was not easy," he said. "The machines were very dangerous."

Although many argue that women did not achieve emancipation during the war years because so many returned to the home afterward, English said in the memories of women he interviewed, "there's a wistfulness, a longing for this time."

And new freedoms did emerge for women, including less restrictive codes of fashion, a less structured lifestyle and an openness and informality which allowed women to enjoy, for example, baseball.

"The war years created a tremendous liberating attitude," McLaughlin said. "It also says that the future is there for you, that the future is there for all young women."

The slides served to amplify the accomplishments of the 46 nominees and 12 winners, whose contributions in professional life, at home and in the community are "entirely a phenomenon of our lifetime," English said.

Waterloo Mayor Brian Turnbull, in lauding the "roomful of positive role models," suggested organizers of the awards ensure young women in the region are personally introduced to the winners.

Following are brief profiles of the winners, with information provided by nominators: