

CHALK TALK

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Dear RWTO Friends:

A few weeks from now, we will all be meeting for lunch again to begin our Spring session. Already I can see our room at Siloam filling up with our London-Middlesex members - animated, smiling and greeting friends. I can hear the happy conversations as we chat over lunch and share our news and winter experiences. As has been the pattern these last two years, we will fill the room in body, in spirit and with cheerful chatter. It is such a welcome sign of how well we are living the RWTO/OERO motto, CARING and SHARING. However, there is so much more. In January, as I prepared the year end report for Provincial and the update for Connections on our Branch achievements and happenings, I realized just how much the projects, the groups and the community outreach have expanded. Our organization is 'blooming' !

Our membership numbers continue to increase. As we wrapped up the events of 2012, membership had reached 190 retired women teachers. London-Middlesex is headed toward 200! Members are actively involved in and more aware of the caring, supportive role we have developed both inside and outside our Branch. We are gaining recognition and respect from the London area community. The evidence is in our lively committees, our meetings, our successful projects and our heartfelt donations to our chosen charities.

Here are just a few specific examples - the Friendship Group is now at 70+ members who can be seen in groups about London throughout the month, meeting for breakfast, having 'lunch with a movie' and attending theatre. Keeping in Touch has a group of a dozen members who are regularly visiting our shut-ins to share stories and a cup of tea. These visits are happily anticipated.

The Educational Fund has an established donation category in the Kiwanis Music Festival with a healthy invested balance in the bank awaiting further ideas for worthy donations.

Women's Community House and My Sisters' Place were overwhelmed this Fall when we arrived at their doors with a huge donation of needed items. Both organizations spoke of the increased need for service to women in our area and expressed their sincere gratitude again and again as the cars were unloaded. They count on us.

The list goes on...so, CHEERS to the generous nature of London-Middlesex members and your continued commitment to our goals. I am proud to be a member with you and proud to represent you as your President.

Cathy Harrison

Dates to Remember:

March 28 - bring non-perishable items for the London Food Bank.

April 18 - bring funds for Educational Awards.

TUESDAY, May 21 - Spring Banquet to be held at Ivey Spencer Leadership Centre 551 Windermere Road (519-679-4546). Parking and entrance to the private Asher's Dining Room can be found on the south side of the building. Cost is \$30.00. Our special guests will be Leslie Uttley, RWTO/OERO President and Diane Rice, Area 3 Director.

LUNCHEONS

Sue Scruton does such a wonderful job of overseeing all our lunch dates. Please make sure you have your money in **TEN** days before the meeting date or you will be put on a waiting list. You will be called if you are on this list. If you have any dietary needs, please let Sue Scruton know at 519-672-7296.



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Save this date!

April 18th/2013, Luncheon at Siloam for

A KALEIDOSCOPE OF FASHION for YOU presented by LAURA, LAURA II, LAURA PETITE

styles, trends, fun and prizes as our member models walk the runway.....

Membership Fees - April 2013 - April 2014

Helen Munce will begin depositing membership fees for 2013 - 2014 after April 1, 2013. Fees are \$43.00 (\$40.00 provincial plus \$3.00 local) for those who retired after 1980. Retirements prior to August 31, 1980 or earlier pay \$18.00 (\$15.00 provincial plus \$3.00 local). If you wish, you may pay at meetings or send a cheque to:

Helen Munce
19 Chepstow Gate
London, ON
N6G 3S6

Make cheques payable to: **RWTO London-Middlesex**
Please let Helen know if you have a change of address, telephone number and/or e-mail address.

Caring and Sharing *contributed by Jane Williams*

The Caring and Sharing group of RWTO thank you for your assistance over the past year. If you know of a special event in the lives of one of the members such as a birthday, anniversary or death, please contact Jane Williams 519-473-5160, by e-mail at janeandowen@sympatico.ca or call Sharon Riley 519-672-3620 with the details.



Love Flowers

JANE TRESTAIN - October 8, 2012
Jane was the daughter of Marian (Noyes) Trestain and the late William "Bill" Trestain. She was a respected teacher in London, avid gardener and enjoyed many summers at Manitoulin Island. Jane was an active member of RWTO and will be missed by her family and friends.



Please remember to bring your used books to the March meeting. Your support is very much appreciated.



Beautitudes for the Friends of the Aged *(courtesy of Sylvan Lake Lodge, Alberta)*

*Blessed are they who know my ears today
Must strain to catch the things they say.
Blessed are those who looked away
When the coffee spilled at the table today.
Blessed are those with a cheery smile
Who stopped to chat for a little while.
Blessed are they who never say,
"You've told that story twice today."
Blessed are they who find a way
To bring back memories of yesterday.
Blessed are they who make it known
That I am loved and not alone.
Blessed are they who ease the days
On my journey Home in loving ways.*



Santa's Elves: Diane Uhre, Irene Cudmore, Jane Williams and Pat Malone entertaining Grace Heaman and bringing us gifts on November 22, 2012, at our Christmas luncheon.

Insurance

Please contact Helen Munce at 519-473-2050 if you would like any information regarding Travel, Auto, Residential Insurance or the Hospital and Home Care Plan. If you have any questions regarding the Hospital and Home Care Plan, please contact Manulife. The telephone number is on the back of your membership card. If you need a claim form, let Helen know.

Please let Manulife know if you have a change of address.

Book Club News *contributed by Patricia Savage*

It's hard to believe that the book club is in its second year. We continue to enjoy a wide variety of books and our interesting discussions make our monthly meetings fun. Our group consists of Kaye Harries, Cathy Harrison, Ruth Havers, Elizabeth Hofmann, Deborah Kaiser, Christine Patterson and Patricia Savage. This year, we welcomed Madeline Hardy. At Christmas time, we again celebrated with a lunch in my home to end our successful times in 2012. We read the following books in 2012 - *The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society*, *The Postmistress*, *House Rules*, *That Old Cape Magic*, *Too Much Happiness*, *Sweetness In The Belly*, *Sanctuary Line* and *The Good Daughters*. We also chose two author studies with books written by Alexander McCall Smith and Paul Theroux. The book club has made us more knowledgeable about the services offered by the London Public Library such as book club bags to be used by groups like ours. There are over 150 different titles in bags of ten paperback copies that can be loaned for six weeks per bag. All you need is a library card. If you have a book club, this resource is excellent as it cuts the costs of purchasing the books or eliminated the need to borrow a copy from your local library. Another experience we had was to ask Ruth Hay, a former teacher librarian who decided to fulfill a dream she had for retirement by writing novels, to be our guest. When she spoke to our group, she had written *Auld Acquaintances*, *Now or Never*, *Time Out Of Mind* with several other books coming along. Our February book is *The Woelfield Poultry Collective* which should give us a humorous experience and hopefully good discussions. Happy Reading in 2013!

Matthews Hall Makes Music - for the RWTO *contributed by J. Frame*

The Retired Women Teachers of Ontario have spirit and love for children. They showed this at a luncheon performance of our Matthews Hall students at Siloam United Church on Thursday, November 22. In Siloam's beautiful chapel, our junior and senior choirs, along with a saxophone group, a mime and a dance group, delivered a variety show that received their delightful smiles, wholehearted applause and warm compliments. We were festive in Santa hats and holiday ponchos: the teachers were likewise with red and green touches to their fashions. We knew that they would love the music and the mime but little did we think they would be familiar with our Gangnam style Reindeer dance. Big thanks to Juanita Johnsson, beloved former Matthews Hall teacher, who invited us and to our talented performance staff for a great beginning to the holiday season. *(Please note: This wonderful letter went out to every parent in the whole school. Thank you, Ms. Frame, Associate Head of Matthews Hall.)*



Your editor's favourite story (*thank you to Mara Hitchins*):
Little Donald's teacher asks, "What is the chemical formula for water?"
Little Donald replies, "H I J K L M N O."
The puzzled teacher asks, "What on earth are you talking about?"
Donald said, "Yesterday, you said it was H to O."

Photography Credit

Thank you to *Kaye Harries* and *Bernarda Norwood* for contributing to our photographs.





Cora Bailey Award *contributed by Patricia Savage*

This year, a Policies and Procedures Committee chaired by Mara Hitchins has been reviewing the Provincial document with the goal of producing a handbook for the local Association to provide guidelines for the Executive to help in directing the work of our local Association.

The committee composed of Barbara Bain, Cathy Harrison, Mara Hitchins and Patricia Savage has met regularly during 2012. In reviewing the Provincial document, we looked at all the awards. The Cora Bailey Award is named after Cora Bailey who was the first Executive Secretary and Treasurer for eleven years at the Provincial level. She also wrote a history book of RWTO/OERO. This award is presented to a Branch member who has contributed outstanding service to her Branch. All Branch members are eligible with the limit of three recipients per year (Revised 2011).

The following recipients from 2008 onward are Barbara Crinklaw, Mara Hitchins, Deborah Kaiser, Doreen Knight, Elizabeth McIntyre, Helen Munce, Lois Peters, Mary Ross, Susan Scruton, Joan Thornhill, Elizabeth Van Dongen as well as Barbara Bain who was a local and Provincial President. Mary Ross, who recently resigned as the Archivist after twelve years, took pictures of events at meetings, as well as producing excellent and informative scrap books to record our history for display and eventually the Archives at Western. Helen Munce is a Past President and presently the Treasurer and Insurance chair. When she was President, she visited our elderly members who were unable to attend meetings. Our Association has been fortunate to have people like these who have served well and shared their leadership skills to help us to thrive and to move forward in our programs.



Elizabeth Van Dongen and new members, Johanna Hurd and Jana McCluskey

HAPPY 100th BIRTHDAY, CLARA TUPPER

Mary Vernon's Vignette:

In 1963, Clara entered Mary's classroom, wearing her boots on the wrong feet. She asked Mary if she ever did that. Mary, of course, replied in the negative only to hear Clara say, "You should do that sometime because it shows children that we ALL make mistakes."

People are like stained glass windows.
They sparkle and shine when the sun is
out,
But when darkness sets in,
Their true beauty is revealed only if there is
light from within.
Elizabeth Kubler-Ross



Membership Report *contributed by Elizabeth Van Dongen*

The membership and activities of London/Middlesex continue to flourish with your active participation. Sixteen new members have joined our group since the fall. Luncheon meetings have averaged over 100 members for the past few months. The Friendship Group breakfasts have seen 20 to 25 members in attendance. These social gatherings have created warm and welcoming events where friendships blossom.

Our programs of outreach through your philanthropic support of our monthly charities are overwhelming for the agencies who receive these benefits. Our visiting teams raise the morale of our homebound members who are still an integral part of our organization. Caring and Sharing, our motto, connects us to those experiencing life events to let them know of our support. The establishment of our Educational Fund provides an opportunity to let the public know The Retired Women Teachers, London/Middlesex are an active group in the community. Where will 2013 take our group? We hope only upward with your continued support.

We Welcome New Members:

- Debby Albin, Jane Boate-Fletcher, Alice Culbert, Janet Ellis, Karen Ersman, Rigmor Glen, Marjorie Glendinning, Evelyn Holmes, Johanna Hurd, Helen Kerr, Jana McCluskey, Ana Parvulescu, Margaret Rabideau, Gwen Spencer, Joan Taylor and Fran Uren.

