

CONNECTIONS

Retired Women Teachers of Ontario • Organisation des enseignantes retraitées de l'Ontario



*Annette Rhodes
President*

To be invited on a journey is an honour and a privilege. To be given the opportunity to travel around this province to visit branches as the 56th President of RWTO/OERO is a privilege I accept humbly yet with great anticipation. To meet and chat with so many members of this organization and share visions and concerns will be enlightening and will help to further our plans to keep our organization healthy, vibrant and flourishing. I am looking forward to getting to know you and making connections which will help me better understand this wonderful organization and what makes it work successfully.

First, let me tell you how very proud I am of each one of you. You are so creative and well organized. You have enriched your communities by giving generously of your time and talents in volunteer hours. You have worked diligently to support your charities and through these efforts have raised approximately one hundred thousand dollars in donations! Well done!

During this past year we celebrated the wonderful success of the Membership Matters Grant and Award and the Open Window for insurance. Many new members joined and some lapsed members rejoined. Our challenge will be to continue this good work. Our continued health depends upon constant renewal and strong leadership. To assist the Provincial Executive in determining the direction needed to achieve these results, I hope you will offer suggestions and ask questions when I visit you. I am asking you to consider these questions:

1. Why did you join RWTO/OERO?
2. Does RWTO/OERO meet your needs? If yes – How? If not – Why not?

President's Message

3. What can we do to retain members and keep them from leaving our organization?
4. What would be your one wish for our organization?

I am looking forward to your responses either by email or when I visit your branch. The information collected will help the Provincial Executive determine future direction. This is your opportunity to assist us and share your vision for our unique organization.

I wish to express a sincere thank you and much appreciation to Marilyn Emmett, Convention Convenor for "Wonders of Niagara" and her Convention Committee for the exceptional creativity and excellent organization displayed in this scenic location. Thank you to the host branches, St. Catharines, Niagara Falls, Niagara South

and Lincoln West, for their excellent work and the many hours they generously gave to make this convention an outstanding success. The flowers were beautiful and the many door prizes kept everyone busy checking their delegate numbers. Well done!

One highlight was the launch of the book, Uncommon Women, a history of RWTO/OERO written by our former parliamentarian, Lee Beech. Judy Anderson wrote a song to introduce this book and the group who sang were dressed in the fashions of the early sixties. Be sure to get your copy of this history of our organization describing the work of the many uncommon women who created it. It's the story of women working with women for women and society. It is why we are still here after fifty-five years.



RWTO/OERO LOGO

A new pin free for every member was distributed at the Annual Convention. Thank you Marilyn Emmett, St. Catharines Branch, for your logo design and for seeing the project through to completion. Note cards, writing paper, stickers and pins are available with the new logo.



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Convention 2011- The Wonders Of Niagara

The majestic Falls greeted delegates and guests as they arrived in Niagara Falls for the 55th RWTO/OERO Convention, held this year from June 6-9. The convention committee warmly welcomed members to the elegant and well-appointed Hilton Fallsview. A number of interesting and informative workshops were offered on Tuesday. Area Directors met with Pat Depencier, Program Coordinator, while our Executive Secretary-Treasurer, Gloria Drake, led a question and answer session for branch treasurers. Mary Jane Finn, Past-President, presented a workshop on Policy and Procedures. Here, each branch received two Policy Manuals for their use. Finally, Bev Pickard, Communication Convenor and Leslie Uttley, Goodwill Convenor, shared strategies and ideas for maintaining and strengthening communications and for keeping in touch with all members.



The Hospitality Suite on the 16th floor was available for those who wanted to visit. The view of the Falls was spectacular, the refreshments were delicious and the music, provided by John Butler at the keyboard, added to the relaxed atmosphere.

Thundering Waters was the Tuesday evening theme and the table centerpieces at dinner reflected so beautifully the blue waters of Niagara. After dinner, the book Uncommon Women was launched, with a rousing, updated rendition of Que Sera Sera, sung by a group of women who were dressed to reflect the early days of our organization. This book is a recent version of our history, researched and written by Lee Beech and edited by Mary Jane Finn. It was for sale throughout the convention. We were entertained by the group Motown: Never Can Say Goodbye, who played and sang some of the great hits from the Motown era. Many of our members just couldn't resist dancing to its familiar tunes.



On Wednesday morning, the Annual General Meeting began for the 143 delegates and other members who were observers. Reports were heard from the various committees. It was announced that pins with the new logo would be distributed to all current members by the branch presidents. Also, we learned that this year, nearly \$100 000, in charitable donations was collected by our branches and distributed across the province. The Budget for 2011-2012 was presented by the Secretary-Treasurer, for deliberation. President Carol Bell then turned the Chair over to the Parliamentarian, Joy Patyk, for the Resolutions.

Briefly, the Resolutions were as follows:

1. The Branch Treasurer shall forward a copy of the Branch Annual Financial Report to the Provincial Office no later than April 30. Carried
2. Branch delegates selected to attend the Annual General Meeting must be representing the Branch through which they pay their Provincial fees. Carried
3. Convention Committee Convenor will send a financial statement of Convention income and expenses, including the original invoices and expense reports, to the Provincial Office by the respective October Board Meeting following the Annual Meeting. Carried
4. That RWTO/OERO fund the expenses (mileage, meals and accommodation) for a branch delegate for the entitled branches. Defeated
 - An amendment to #4 was presented, that resolution 4 be referred to the Executive, enabling them to look at other aspects, including, but not limited to: partial payment for a second delegate; only for branches of fewer than 100; a sliding scale based on membership. Defeated
 - A second amendment to #4 was presented that RWTO/OERO fund the cost of a full Convention Package (as priced each year on the Convention Registration form) for a branch delegate for the entitled branches. Carried
5. That the practice of paying the RWTO/OERO President an honorarium be discontinued. Defeated
6. That the Provincial Recording Secretary be granted an honorarium of \$750.00 annually. Carried

7. That the 2010-2011 Provincial Recording Secretary be granted \$750.00. Carried
8. That branches, with up to and including 50 members, be entitled to an alternate delegate and that RWTO/OERO fund the cost of a full Convention Package for this alternate. Carried

Resolutions 6, 7, 8 came from the floor of the convention.

Following the business meeting, some members participated in one of the three tours offered, while others relaxed, went to see the Falls close up, or lightened their purses at the casino!



Wednesday evening's theme was The Fruit of the Vine and a small bottle of wine was presented at the tables for each guest to take home. Feather in your Hat and Barbara Bain Awards were presented. Honorary Life Members, Mary Lanktree, Jeannine Renaud and Carol Bell were inducted. A musical tribute to the honorees was performed by the Slade Family, for all to enjoy. Finally, The Hamilton All Star Vocal Jazz Group rounded out the evening in their talented and dynamic style.



On Thursday morning, Provincial Achivist, Barbara Moorcroft, led us in a fitting Memorial Service to honour those 125 members who had passed away this year. Each of the twelve Area Directors presented a flower in memory of these women.

Next, the remainder of the committee reports were presented and approved, as was the Budget for the 2011-2012 year.



The final luncheon theme was Caring and Sharing and we were honoured to recognize seven Over Nineties members. It was such a pleasure to have these ladies with us. Following the luncheon, Honorary President, Jean Axcell presided at the Induction of Officers for the 2011-2012 RWTO/OERO Board.

Many thanks go to Marilyn Emmett and her committee for an excellent convention. It was superbly organized and executed. The venue and staff were most accommodating. All in all, it was a wonderful event!

We were treated to The Call to Convention by Central Algoma, who will be hosting next year's 56th convention in Sault Ste. Marie. Through a very fun-filled musical production, they invited us to Come North to Algoma. It should be fun!



See you there next June.
Carol Bell, Past President

Membership

As I'm writing this in July my mind is still full of the wonderful experiences shared by all those who attended the recent Annual Meeting in Niagara Falls in June. If you have never attended our annual Convention I urge you to consider it for next year. Whether you are a new member of RWTO or a seasoned one of many years, this is an experience you should take part in, not only for the excellent involvement it provides but mainly to get to know and appreciate this organization and its devoted Executive. Lee Beech has written a wonderful account about the founders of RWTO, praising them as Uncommon Women in her title. Each time I attend the Convention or Board meetings I am struck by the wealth of talent and expertise among the gathering of today's 'uncommon women'. These traits are recognized and celebrated in the winners of our various awards.

Feather In Your Hat

Mississauga

Oakville

Hamilton-Wentworth

The Feather in Your Hat award was presented this year to:

- The Mississauga Branch for launching their excellent website. They wanted to share information, communicate enthusiasm and creativity and encourage membership, as well as 'going green' in establishing a paperless mode of communication.



- The Oakville Branch for their creativity in crocheting sleeping mats and totes for Haitian Earthquake victims, not to mention keeping hundreds of plastic bags out of the landfill system.

- The Hamilton-Wentworth Branch who, for the last twelve years, have hosted a monthly reception at Citizenship Court for immigrants becoming new Canadians. As friends of the Courtroom they welcome and escort candidates and their families, answer questions, and take photos. After the ceremony they serve coffee and treats with a

Canadian theme, presenting everyone with flags, pins and pencils.

- Honourable Mention and fancy hat also went to Upper Canada East for their ongoing efforts to increase membership and to provide new and interesting programs.

Thank you to the Membership Committee of Mary Duffin, Donna Parkhill and Pat Depencier for creating this year's beautiful hats.

Barbara Bain

Chatham-Kent

Rendezvous

Brant

I was very pleased to have Barbara Bain present the award in her name to those branches whose numbers increased the most for their size. They were Chatham-Kent, Rendezvous and Brant. Welcome to all our new members. Congratulations to all the above branches and to all the fabulous 'uncommon women' who made it all happen.

I hope next year to have submissions from every branch for the Feather in your Hat Award - we want to hear about all of your excellent programs, to be able to celebrate the caring and sharing done by branches all across the Province.



Annalee Ladouceur

Membership Convenor

Goodwill - Best Wishes for our over nineties!

It is a great honour to serve as the RWTO/OERO Provincial Goodwill Convenor. From the middle of June to the end of August, 50 cards have already been sent to those who have celebrated 90 and over birthdays,

There have been four of our members celebrating their 100th birthday. Special flower presentations have been made by their branches to: Blanche Neal, Sarnia Lambton; Mary Eastaugh, Owen Sound (our provincial president Annette Rhodes was on hand to help with that presentation); Alice Goheen, Guelph Wellington with the assistance of the Kingston Branch and Mildred Wideman, Scarborough. We also had Mary Moles of the Blue Mountain Branch celebrating 104 and Catherine Jolley of the Beaver Valley Branch at 103. What an amazing group of women we have!

None of this would be possible without the invaluable help

from our Executive Secretary Treasurer, Gloria Drake, who works hard to keep our lists updated. She in turn needs the help of the Branch Goodwill Convenors to keep her advised about their members.

I have received several delightful notes, cards and pictures. Who could ask for a better job!



Anne Graham
Second Vice President,
Goodwill Convenor

Web News

www.rwto.org

BRANCH NEWS

This area is currently under construction!

Over the next few months we look to add information from every one of our 52 branches.

We are very excited and pleased to be expanding our RWTO/OERO web site, www.rwto.org, to include information about every one of our 52 branches. Each branch may send us updates and should do so at least once a year. If your branch already has a newsletter, program brochure, email news, we can post these to the web immediately. You send us the material as you would like to see it posted. Already on their way are: Burlington, Chatham-Kent, Hamilton-Wentworth, Mississauga and Windsor-Essex.

When you open Branch News, you will see a listing of those branches who have been linked. Each one will be a little different depending on the activities and interests of the branch. We would like to help each branch create a 'Home Page' which could include: Branch Name, a Welcoming Message, Places / Times of Meetings and Events, Who to Contact, Special Projects, Pictures, Links to Newsletters, Programs, Membership Forms, etc. It may be simple or 'fancy' and will likely change over time.

Contact: Areas 1,2,5,12 Bev Pickard
rwtoconnections@yahoo.ca

Areas 3,4,9,11 Marilyn Emmett
emmett@cogeco.ca

Areas 6,7,8,10 Joyce Fee
jfee@accel.net

Check with your Branch President to find out what is happening in your branch or contact Bev Pickard, Communication Convenor at rwtoconnections@yahoo.ca.

Watch for our website 'facelift'. Occasionally we change the photo line up with members photos and you never know who you might recognize there!

Thanks everyone. It's going to be another exciting year!



Bev Pickard
Communication Convenor



◀ Marilyn Emmett

Joyce Fee ▶



Insurance Matters

As our broker, Terry Kennedy, said in her report at the 2011 Convention,

“Wow. What a year!”

The Open Enrolment Period was an incredible success which far exceeded expectations. Over 1400 new policies were purchased by our members or their spouses. Preparation began the year before so that we could hit the ground running once the ‘window’ was approved by Manulife and our RWTO/OERO Board. Our success was also your success. Many of us participated in meetings focused on the Insurance Plans. We heard the message again when Carol Bell visited so many Branches last fall. Thank you Carol, Anne Graham, Terry Kennedy, Branch Presidents, Insurance Convenors, and you our members. You all helped to deliver a very positive message about the benefits of our special Hospital and Home Care and Death and Dismemberment Plans.

As we look ahead to the coming year we are anticipating more claims for benefits from our insurance plans. Those of us who had pre-existing conditions when we joined the plans during the Open Enrolment period will now be eligible to make claims as the twelve-month waiting time lapses. If you have

any questions about making a claim please bring them to your Branch Insurance Convenor. If she cannot answer them, call Terry Kennedy, our Broker. She takes the time to see that our members understand our plans and are well served.

Last year many of you received compensation for Hospital stays, Transportation, Health Care Aids, Cataract Surgery and Ambulance. This Insurance is through Manulife Financial. For questions on new enrolments, call them at 1-866-410-0550. Our plan can be used on its own or often as a combined benefit with other insurance packages that you have. As well as being a great benefit to those who use the Insurance, RWTO/OERO also benefits from this Insurance because of a profit sharing arrangement with the company.



Caring and sharing and having fun,

Judy Anderson

Provincial Insurance Convenor

INSURANCE WORKSHOP

Guelph October 19 and 20, 2011

Last year we came to you. Many of you invited Anne, Terry or myself to take a few minutes or longer to present our Insurance Plans and their benefits to your branch. This year we are inviting all Branch Insurance Convenors to meet together in Guelph on October 19 and 20 to share what works in their part of Ontario and learn what other branches do. All of us will benefit from a presentation by Terry Kennedy and the opportunity to ask questions and discuss problems our members have when completing the Claim Form. A representative from CanAm Travel Insurance Brokers will deliver information that will help us answer questions from members back home. Travel, accommodation and meals will be paid for the Insurance Convenor by RWTO/OERO.

Nancy Iannizzi, Assistant Insurance Convenor, and I are working with Terry Kennedy and your Area Directors to arrange the fall workshop for Branch Insurance Convenors. Understanding our insurance plans and how to make claims will be an important part of the insurance workshop in October.

I hope every branch is represented.

Resolutions

Resolutions for the 2012 Annual Meeting must be submitted to Leslie Uttley, Convenor of the Resolutions Committee, by November 15, 2011. Each resolution submitted must only contain one key idea or focus. The intent of the resolution to be presented at the Annual Meeting should be clear, concise and focused. When your branch is preparing to submit a resolution, questions and concerns should be directed to Leslie Uttley or Joy Patyk, parliamentarian, who are available to assist with the wording or structure.



Please send resolutions for the Annual Meeting 2012 to Leslie Uttley 86714 Courtney Court, Box 13 RR#1, Kincardine Ontario N2Z 2X3 or by email at leslieuttley@tnt21.com.

Leslie Uttley,

First Vice-President

Issues And Concerns

Broken Trust

Ann was a happy, active and friendly senior who volunteered her time and took part in many of the activities available to seniors in her community. Then friends and neighbours began to notice bruises that were inconsistent with Ann's explanation. She seemed fearful and began withdrawing from all her activities. The final straw was when she stopped e-mailing family and friends. What was happening? Could it be elder abuse? No one wanted to believe it could happen in their community.

Unfortunately elder abuse can happen in any relationship and crosses all racial, ethnic, economic and religious backgrounds reaching families in every community. It can take the form of physical, emotional, financial, sexual abuse or neglect. Abuse wears many faces and while it is alarming it typically occurs at the hands of people who are most trusted by the victims like their spouse, children, grandchildren, caregivers and financial or other advisors. They may also be a person in some other position of power such as a landlord, the executor of a will or someone with power of attorney over the victim's affairs.

It is estimated that between 4 and 10% of older adults in Canada will experience some form of abuse. The number of seniors experiencing abuse may be much higher since elder abuse often goes unreported. Many abuse victims do not report the crime because they fear losing the relationship with the abuser or may face some form of retaliation. Often they are embarrassed or they just don't know where to get help.

There are some things that can be done to protect yourself and make sure you do not find yourself in this situation. Plan for your own future while you are still able and stay active within your community. Have outside interests as well as friends of all ages. Keep in contact with friends and family. Stay involved, stay sociable and speak up if you are concerned. Seek legal advice if you suspect abuse. Consider joint power of attorney for personal care and financial matters.

Elder abuse is a devastating reality for many older Canadians. It thrives on silence. The time has come to bring this

tragic secret out in the open. If you are experiencing abuse or neglect or if you suspect that an older adult is being harmed or mistreated help is available. If you want to talk to someone or to find help you can go to Community Agencies or Organizations, Seniors Centres or the police services in your area. If you are in immediate danger call 911.

If a person should disclose to you that they are being abused believe them and don't judge them. Encourage the person to seek assistance and help them to find the right place to turn if you are able to do so. Never confront the abuser yourself. This could put you and the victim in harm's way.

The following list of websites will provide more information on this troubling issue: The Ontario Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse www.onpea.org, Community Care Access Centres www.ccac-ont.ca, Advocacy Centre for the Elderly www.advocacycentreelderly.org. The government website www.seniors.gc.ca has an excellent article called "It's Time To Face The Reality".

It may be difficult for any of us to believe a senior citizen is being subjected to abuse but it is happening at an alarming rate. Elder abuse grows more daunting as the needs and demands grow each year. Older adults need to be seen as valued, contributing, productive members of society. We all need to speak up because it is the hidden nature of this crime that permits it to flourish. This will allow all of us to age with joy and not fear. All seniors have a right to respect, to live with dignity and in safety and experience no abuse.



Dianne Rice

Issues and Concerns Convenor

I wish to thank Nancy Lauzon for her assistance in researching this article

Branch News

BEAVER VALLEY

Four members of the Beaver Valley Branch had a wonderful time at this year's convention in Niagara Falls. We have added a bridge/euchre club to our activities and it is very popular. Three of our members were involved in running a one-week art camp for 20 children and it was a great success. Beaver Valley members enjoy socializing at monthly breakfasts and meetings. We continue to make donations to a school breakfast program and a museum. At our annual Christmas dinner, we donate food and gifts to our local Outreach programs in Meaford and Thornbury. Donna Hemeon, Area Director, presented Mary Milne with the Cora Bailey Award for

her years of dedicated leadership. The presentation was a highlight at our annual picnic in Thornbury where we shared a delicious potluck lunch with our members and guests.

BELLEVILLE

We are busy with four meetings a year. We learned of Belleville's connection to the underground railway, and a member shared her mother-in-law's experience of life in Nazi Germany. Members are involved with monthly meetings of the Euchre Club, Bridge Club, Book Club, Chit Chat Group, and Diner's club. Phyllis Closson received the 2010 Helen Calnan award for her leadership in our Craft group for almost 20 years, and

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Mavis Rupnow received the 2011 Helen Calnan award for her hard work and leadership within our group and area. These two women have certainly led, through their example, the motto of caring, sharing and having fun. We donated to the 'Adopt A Child' program, and contributed hygiene products for high school students. Our members are actively involved in the community participating in programs such as Inn from the Cold, Grannies for Africa, visiting retirement residences, volunteering at local schools and hospitals, working at local museums, and at churches.

BRANT



Members of Brant experienced paradise on a trip to Port Dover by cruising along the Lynn River and Black Creek on the River Rider, a one-hour scenic tour. We learned of the history of the river, viewed gorgeous cottages/homes, enjoyed undisturbed nature and felt the peace of being retired in June. This culminated a year of successful activities that brought retired teachers together for fellowship, travel and education. A visit to National Historic Ruthven Park, a Whist card party, a Valentine's Tea at Charlotte's Villa, a bus excursion to the Niagara Casino, a Spring banquet featuring vocalist/story-telling artist Hamish Robertson, and 100 Lunches, a theatre production directed by our own member, Jean Solis, made for a bonus year with something-for-everyone.

COLDWATER

The Coldwater Branch of RWTO/OERO is a small but growing branch thanks in part to the Membership Matters Grant we received. Our numbers have increased by six members. We have teams of three who share the load of meeting planning. We meet from September to December and March to June. At each meeting we collect donations for the local Food Bank. A member sends out appropriate cards for birthdays, illness, grief, or just 'thinking of you'. Our branch unanimously nominated Sylvia Head for the Cora Bailey Award. She is an active volunteer in the Coldwater area, has efficiently carried out the duties of branch treasurer, and is a very worthy recipient of this award. Our Archivist compiles a profile page for each of us. Sharing this information helps us get to know each other, and reveals the different experiences and perspectives we have had in our chosen profession.

DUNDALK-HIGHPOINT

2010-2011 proved to be an eventful year for our branch. Thanks to the Membership Incentive our membership has grown. At our April meeting, Hazel Scutt presented Dorothy Goheen with the Cora Bailey Award. Dorothy is a dedicated member of RWTO/ERO, both at the local and provincial level, serving as provincial secretary for a time. She is our Sunshine Convenor. Recently, she was recognized for her community volunteering.

We sadly learned of the death of member, Elisa Vandenberg. She was an educational pioneer, teaching at Happy Heights School for developmentally challenged children in Proton Station and later at Dundalk-Preston Community School. Elisa's goal was to equip her students to become better integrated into society.

We congratulate Mary Lanktree, who received an Honorary Membership Award at the Niagara Convention. Mary is a dedicated branch member who served as Area Director for two terms and co-convened the 2008 Convention at Blue Mountain.

DURHAM NORTH

Durham North is a large farming area which includes many small towns and villages. Our small number of members come together for fellowship and fun, encouraging new members to join our branch. Our goodwill committee supports colleagues in times of illness and sorrow with cards and visits.

The branch meets two times a year for hot luncheons. Luncheon is followed by a short business meeting and we end with an interesting speaker or demonstration. This spring we had an informative presentation about the supportive outreach program between the migrant workers from Mexico and the residents of Beaverton. The workers are employed on local farms to plant and harvest vegetables. The Anglican Church members invited the workers to come to church dinners and services to share their culture and language. In turn, the workers have encouraged people to learn some Spanish and experience Mexican cuisine. We enjoy hearing about such initiatives in our area.

FLESHERTON

On Monday, July 25, the Flesherton and District Branch of RWTO/OERO along with the Warton Branch met for their annual picnic at Inglis Falls, near Owen Sound. We were also very pleased to welcome our Area 1 Director, Donna Hemeon, to the gathering. She introduced the book Uncommon Women to the group. A time of fellowship and entertainment followed a bountiful picnic lunch. These two branches were twinned in 1982 and have met every year since. This is a wonderful opportunity to reminisce and meet the new retirees. We of Flesherton and District Branch are pleased to have three new members.

HALDIMAND

Haldimand Branch has enjoyed another successful year doing

continued next page

what we enjoy most – eating and being together, not necessarily in that order. The being together is the highlight. In addition to enjoying ourselves, we try to support local community charities collecting needed supplies for the Women's Shelter, Early Childhood Centres and the Salvation Army Christmas program. This spring, we decided to try helping our four footed friends, collecting a wide variety of items for an animal shelter. Donations ranged from old blankets and towels to pet foods to pet beds and even some cash. We are very proud of what our members and friends are willing to give. There is no doubt we live the "Care and Share" motto.

HAMILTON-WENTWORTH



The Hamilton Wentworth branch is anticipating an exciting year. The executive has worked hard to plan some very interesting activities for the year. We are going to: have lunch at Dundurn Castle, a Harvest Lunch, Christmas at Liuna Station, a Friendship lunch, a progressive card

party, a trip to the Fallsview Casino, Breakfast by the Bay, and end with a golf tournament. As well as these fabulous activities we have a number of fun and interesting interest groups. Some of these groups are: book clubs, bowling club, art club, knitting club, bridge club, travel club, citizenship court club, gardening club, golf club, movie club, scrapbooking club, and a walking club. Surely there is something for everyone! Together we are realizing our motto of caring and sharing.

LANARK

At our luncheon at The Lombardy Agricultural Hall in April, Provincial President Carol Bell presented Anne Graham and Jane Schoenherr with the Cora Bailey Award for their great support of our branch. Congratulations. Prizes were also awarded for some lovely "Easter" bonnets. What talent for designing. Our May meeting was held at St. James Centennial Hall in Franktown, formerly the S.S. #2 Beckwith Township School. One of our present RWTO members, Carole Foster, relayed some of her memories of teaching in this one room school. Other members shared poems and stories from other Beckwith schools in the area. Memorabilia depicting past school days was displayed throughout the hall. At the 2011 Convention, one of our past presidents, Anne Graham, was installed as Second Vice President of the Provincial Executive. Congratulations, Anne. We, in the Lanark Branch, are very proud that you are representing us at the provincial level for the next four years. Your initiative and enthusiasm will serve you well as you carry out your duties with RWTO/OERO.

LINCOLN WEST

Our group has been enhanced this year by several new members who joined us as a result of last September's outreach. We have a full slate of activities planned for the next year including a meeting focusing on travel in September and

an uplifting Christmas program involving local students and giving to our community needs. Spring sees us digging into an experience of gardening, June a focus on cooking and finally September again involving wellness. Our ladies have contributed to both local needs and those in the Third World. We hope to respond to Second Stage Housing, Community Care and other local needs as they arise in the spirit of sharing and caring. We continue to meet at Beamsville Fairgrounds and be catered to by the able ladies' committee there for our lunches four times yearly. This location is both affordable and accessible for those who need this consideration.

NIAGARA SOUTH

What an exciting year it has been for the members of the Niagara South Branch!

At the Marine Museum, a local historian spoke of the role of local members in the war of 1812. This was very meaningful. A donation of pajamas and books were collected and donated to a local agency for children in need. At the meeting in Fort Erie we learned about the role of handmade quilts during the times of the Underground Railroad.

A member spoke about her travel to Sierra Leone to fulfill the wishes of a dear friend by distributing assistance to local women. Cora Bailey Awards were presented to Margot Smith, a devoted member who organizes rides to events, and Ellen McIntee, a strong advocate for our health care plan. Ellen passed away in January. The branch supported our Convention in Niagara by organizing the silent auction and raffle. We are pleased to say the raffle was a great success.

NORTHUMBERLAND-SOUTH DURHAM

This past year we formed a branch choir, which has performed several times. Our western area's monthly Breakfast Club has provided social contacts for retired women teachers and has attracted several new members to RWTO/OERO. Other social events have included the September Welcome Coffee Event held at three locations, an October visit to the Spinning Museum in Colborne with lunch at the Grafton Inn, and our annual Birthday Party. General meetings were held in September, December, and May. We were entertained and educated by three amazing speakers: Dr. Julie Henry, a Naturopath Doctor, Barbara Marian, a Tae Kwon Do instructor and international referee, and our Provincial President, Carol Bell. Our branch members continue to give generously to a number of women focussed charities - The Giving Tree, Northumberland Services for Women and Bethesda House. We congratulate Barbara Moorcroft who received the Cora Bailey Award, and Lee Beech who launched her book, Uncommon Women, at the Provincial Annual Meeting in June.

OWEN SOUND

On June 21st we had our first executive meeting at Grey Roots Museum where we planned to have four formal branch and ten executive meetings. We also have many informal Gatherings at local restaurants, winery tours, trips etc. Our Best News.... The Schoolhouse Project was COMPLETED June 21st at 12:15!!! The Bell Tower was raised up and onto the

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Schoolhouse Roof at Grey Roots Museum. Since our Executive Meeting was there that day the Ladies went out to watch and cheer! This crowning touch concludes SIX Years of dedicated work, volunteer labour, food teams for workers, golf tournaments, Music in the Barn, quilt raffles and constant fundraising. We, along with RTO, raised more than \$100,000.00. Please stop in at Grey Roots Museum to see the 'Fruit of Our Labours' and feel our collective feeling of an 'Attitude of Gratitude' to all who gave of their time and money. Retired teachers stepped up and were willing workers.

OTTAWA CARLETON

At our Christmas luncheon we raised \$1000.00 and collected toiletry donations for Harmony House (a women's shelter) and two bags of used glasses for the CNIB. Our events have included a tour and luncheon at the Cordon Bleu Cooking School, a luncheon at the Canal Ritz Restaurant overlooking the Rideau Canal skating rink, a visit to Temple's Sugar Bush in Ferguson's Falls for a tour and a luncheon in their restaurant, and a fashion show luncheon at the Travelodge Hotel. At the AGM our special guest, President Carol Bell, brought greetings from the Province and helped in the presentations of our two Cora Bailey Award recipients, Gladys Tyler and Vicky Ash. Summer activities include a fundraising pot luck event at the cottage of member Val Leach-Ray, our annual tea at the Billings Estate, and sightseeing and lunch at the Baldachin Restaurant in historic Merrickville. Fall events will include our welcome to retirement tea for newly retired colleagues.

PETERBOROUGH



Let's Do Lunch Bunch

Do you enjoy lunching out with friends in an interesting setting, such as an inn, a golf course, a winery or maybe exploring ethnic food or visiting a restaurant recommended in a tourist publication? Such was the vision of Joyce Fee, when she launched our Let's Do Lunch group in 2008. She researched more than 36 venues/menus, shared the information with members using

emails, and arranged meeting points/carpooling. Members have enjoyed the monthly outings that epitomize caring, sharing and having fun. Cuisine and settings have varied greatly. We have experienced ethnic foods, enjoyed waterfronts, historical sites, a winery, and many good dining places within driving distance of Peterborough. Interestingly, in April, we surprised Joyce with a celebratory cake on her 80th when lunching at Fleming College's Fulford's! Our members thank Joyce and hope Let's Do Lunch continues for many years! Would Let's Do Lunch appeal to your members?

SOUTH BRUCE

South Bruce meets twice a year for luncheon meetings with speakers on varied topics. Our charities this year were the Stephen Lewis Foundation, Mission of Hope (Haiti Fund),

Habitat for Humanity - the Hanover build and The Children Are Special Foundation. The membership incentive program worked well for our unit as we gained six new members. The Insurance window was a great idea as it helped to encourage these new members. In the community our group plants and maintains a flowerbed in one of Kincardine's lovely parks. Although small in numbers, our enthusiastic group, works diligently to promote caring and sharing in our community and abroad.

ST. CATHARINES

The St. Catharines Branch, with more than 125 members participating, hosted Convention Niagara. Carol Bell, served as the Provincial President, Marilyn Emmett as Convention Convenor and now Nancy Iannizzi is the Provincial Assistant Insurance Convenor. Beth Kent, Geraldine Waud, and Margaret Ewert, all Past Presidents of our Branch, received Cora Bailey Awards. We also welcomed 57 new members many of whom attended a Wine and Cheese reception hosted by the Executive. We are presently the largest Provincial Branch with more than 360 members. Our general meetings and luncheons are held on the fourth Wednesdays of September, October, April and May. We had presentations by author Cathy Marie Buchanan, Mayor Brian McMullen, and Sing Niagara. We collected money for Community Care and participated in the Rankin Cancer Run. Our Interest Groups include Bowling, Bridge, Community Outreach, Golf, Digital Photography, Gourmet Cooking, Revolving Books, Lunch Bunch, Book Commentaries, Travelogue, Creating Memoirs, and Walking.

TRENTON

We meet monthly and plan a variety of programs including a Meet and Greet wine and cheese, a Drive Wise for Seniors, a speaker on cycling in Croatia, a Life Enhancement Teacher explaining the Law of Attraction, a Ballroom Dancing demonstration followed by a formal tea with members dressed to the 9's, a games day and a delicious Turkey Christmas dinner. Our Trips committee took us to see Billy Elliott in Toronto and have planned an historical and cultural tour of Northumberland Hills including a ride on the carousel in Roseneath. Next spring we're off to see War Horse in Toronto, as well as the Bolshoi Ballet's Swan Lake. We were pleased to have Carol Bell, Provincial President, and Barb Moorcroft, area director, attend our May meeting and install new branch officers for 2011-12, which is gearing up to be another exciting year filled with caring, sharing and having fun for Trenton and District branch!

WIARTON

Warton Branch enjoyed a July potluck picnic at Inglis Falls with its twin branch, Flesherton. Warton's new president, Ellen Coady, faced off with Flesherton's president, Gwen Atchison, in a guessing game in which we all participated by standing to a secret code. Area 1 Director Donna Hemeon introduced the new RWTO history book. The Warton Branch is celebrating its 40th anniversary at Red Bay's Wildwood Lodge in September where the first branch meeting was originally planned.

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RWTO/OERO Calendar 2011-12

September 1, 2011	Annual Provincial membership fees are due.
September 13-14, 2011	Provincial Executive Meeting
October 11, 2011	Submissions for November newsletter
October 18-19, 2011	Provincial Board of Directors Meeting
October 19-20, 2011	Provincial Insurance Workshop, Guelph Holiday Inn
November 15, 2011	Submissions for Resolutions for 2012 Convention
November 30, 2011	Determine Branch numbers for Convention delegates
January 31, 2012	Nominations for Board 2012-13 Nominations for Honorary Membership Awards for 2012 Convention
February 14, 2012	Submissions for March newsletter
April 15, 2012	Submit Delegate Forms for Annual Meeting
April 24-25, 2012	Provincial Executive Meetings
June 4-7, 2012	Provincial Board of Directors Meetings
June 5-7, 2012	56th Annual Convention, Sault Ste. Marie

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