

CHALK TALK FEBRUARY 2019

RWTO/OERO London-Middlesex Branch

Editor: Janice Thielenhaus



President's Message



I watched a television talk show once which focussed on achieving happiness in retirement. The main items that I remembered are that we need **Social Fulfillment**, **Structure in our lives** (a reason for getting out of bed in the morning), **Stimulation of learning something new** and finally a **Story of being part of something bigger than ourselves**.

Our organization of Retired Women Teachers of London and Middlesex makes it very possible for us to achieve happiness in retirement. We are ***socially fulfilled*** by our Outreach programs such as, "A Book for Every Child", The Women's Rural Resource Centre and My Sisters' Place. All these organizations have been blessed by our donations. As well, following our tradition established in 2017, our Branch members donated \$200 to the Salvation Army Christmas Program instead of purchasing little Santa gifts for ourselves.

The ***Structure*** our group provides for all, centres on our wonderful luncheon meetings, our friendship activities, breakfasts or lunches, our book clubs and our wonderful RWTO choir. All of these give us lots of reasons to get excited about our days. Our luncheon meetings have been very popular this fall welcoming each time approximately 160 members and guests. Our "Each One, Reach One" program of inviting new guests have resulted in the addition of new members. Welcome!

We were thrilled to listen to our guest speakers this Fall as they gave us the ***Stimulation of learning something new***. In September, Doug McCarthy spoke to us of the importance of words, and to reach out to others. Yolanda Henry of the Tabitha Foundation explained to us in October how this organization helps achieve dreams for the women, children and families in Cambodia. Our wonderful RWTO choir entertained us with wonderful music and I'm sure all of us and the choir learned something new from their selections. The entertaining presentation of the "Twelve Days of a Canuck Christmas" provided great enjoyment and hilarity.

Our organization of Retired Women Teachers is one Branch in Area 3 of the provincial organization. In October, Leslie Carroll-Frey, the Area 3 Director, attended our lunch and brought greetings from the provincial level. We have a ***Story*** of being part of something bigger. We receive a provincial *Connections* newsletter published 3 times a year, which gives us the news of what is happening at the provincial level. Our organization has the motto of *Caring and Sharing*. We like to reach out and support our members in times of illness, loneliness, stress and sorrow.

As you read this newsletter, you will realize that there are many Executive members and heads of Committees who are involved in many areas of our Branch. I thank them for all that they do. We have the wonderful opportunity to work together and have fun. We continue to plan activities for the interest and involvement of all. If you have any ideas for Friendship activities, please feel free to share with the Executive.

Mary Maxwell



LUNCHEON DATES TO REMEMBER

Please remember to return the Book Bags in March and April

Thursday, March 28, 2019	Wayne Hissong speaking on Travel Safety
Thursday, April 25, 2019	Fitness in Retirement - Centre for Activity and Aging
Thursday, May 23, 2019	ANNUAL SPRING BANQUET

AWARDS RECEIVED in 2018

The **Barbara Bain Award** - a Provincial Award

Once again, **our Branch** was awarded the Barbara Bain Award for the greatest increase of members in the past year. This Award was presented at the Annual Convention held in July 2018. Barbara Bain is a London-Middlesex member and a former Provincial President.



Barbara Bain is second from the right, surrounded by the London-Middlesex Executive members present at the Convention.

The **Shining Star Award** - a Branch Award

Congratulations to **Sandra McKeen** and **Johanna Hurd** who received this Award for their long-term service and support of our members, and for their volunteer work in the community. Sandra has been the luncheon convener and an organizer of many Friendship Group activities. Johanna has been very involved with the choir in various capacities, as well as conductor for several years.



The Shining Star Awards were presented to Sandra McKeen and Johanna Hurd at our Annual Meeting in May.

The **Cora Bailey Award** - a Provincial Award

Beginning in 2006, this award honours members who have contributed excellent leadership and outstanding service. The recipient in October 2018 was **Nancy Bell**, the Past President. She put forth outstanding efforts in her role as President and took on extra responsibilities, working quietly without fanfare. Her ability to work well with people helped to facilitate a growing membership and a harmonious Branch.



Mary Maxwell and Cathy Harrison presented the Cora Bailey Award to Nancy Bell.

Congratulations to our winners.

Patricia Savage

RWTO SUPPLEMENTARY INSURANCE

This supplementary **Health Insurance** for Hospital and Home Care plan is designed especially for RWTO/OERO members and their spouses so that they can have additional coverage when needed. Please note:

1. **During the first year** of your retirement your acceptance into this plan is guaranteed. You do not need to complete the Medical Questionnaire that is part of the Application Form.

2. Our premiums have remained the same even though we had three additional benefits to our Hospital and Home Care Plan in 2017/18.

You can find information on the coverage in the leaflets available from Helen Munce at the Luncheon meetings.

3. **If you have any questions or need a Claims Form, contact Helen Munce at 519-473-2050.**

Call Manulife if you have a change of address, 1-800-268-3763.

New enrollees with questions, call 1-866-410-0550.

* The mailing address for sending in Claims has changed, effective Dec. 2018.

**NEW ADDRESS: Manulife Claims,
P.O. Box 670
Stn. Waterloo,
Waterloo, ON, N2J 4B8**

Helen Munce

12 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS - CANADIAN STYLE

At the November 2018 luncheon the choir sang, and the Merry-makers performed another hilarious skit to the tune of *The 12 Days of Christmas*, the final line of the chorus being "and a moose in a maple tree!"



CHRISTMAS CHOIR 2018

Gillian Laidlaw led the choir while Johanna Hurd played the piano for several Christmas songs and then for the Merry-makers' skit.



Johanna and Gillian were applauded and thanked.

OUTREACH PROGRAM

At our September Luncheon members were asked to bring a book suitable for a child - toddlers up to adolescents for the **A Book for Every Child** distribution. The Branch members donated 225 books and \$55.00 to the cause in 2018.

Janet Wombwell displays the book donations in September, with Irla Stewart standing by in the foreground.



Since 1992, the London Public Library has spent each year collecting books to distribute to children who otherwise would not own a book. Not-for-Profit organizations, such as schools, child care centres, new immigrant groups are invited to email requests outlining their needs to the LPL.

Typically, over 6000 children receive a book distributed through more than 40 area agencies serving families including, Children's Aid Society, LUSO Community Services, Madame Vanier Children's Services, Merrymount Children's Centre, Western Area Youth Services and Thames Valley District School Board, to name a few.

One thank-you letter reads, "**I only wish the donors could have seen the delighted faces of the children. They really found it hard to believe that the book wasn't on loan - it was their very own!**"

The donation made by our Branch of RWTO is always greatly appreciated! It promotes awareness of the importance of books in a child's life, supports family literacy and has a direct impact on children in our community.

In other months this past year, members have donated items to the **Women's Rural Resource Centre** of Strathroy and Area; London's **My Sisters' Place**; the **London Food Bank** and the Branch made a financial contribution to the **Salvation Army** Christmas Program in December in lieu of gifts to members.

A collection of Funds is made for **Educational Awards** in May. In 2018, members contributed \$1040.00, the Branch funds added \$110.00. The Kiwanis Oral Communications' competition received \$150.00; the Merrymount Children's Centre and the Bright Futures' Bursary Program were each given \$500.00.

Sandra O'Brien, Co-Vice President

IN MEMORIAM

It saddens us to announce we have lost these wonderful ladies during the past year. We were privileged to have known them and extend our condolences to their families, friends and colleagues.

Mary Whyte on July 9, 2018
Bernice Flett on July 16, 2018
Lulu Carson on August 15, 2018
Libby Anderson on September 10, 2018
Mary E. Ross on November 1, 2018
Merle Parish on November 8, 2018
Marilyn J. Gibson on January 6, 2019

Nancy Bell, Past President

NEW MEMBERS

We have welcomed 32 new members in 2018.

Slava Shiell	Kathryn Fuller
Cathee Crinklaw	Karen Folkerson-Walton
Gerrie Evans	Shannon Lee Kelly
Diane Browne	Bettyanne Pajot
Joy Morrison	Nancy Davis
Gillian Laidlaw	Carolyn Wood
Cory Rochon-Ratko	Cheryl Trenholm
Barbara Clarke	Tina Zink-Brawn
Chris Boston	Christine Findlater
Dorothy Sample	Anne Sinclair
Elizabeth Fox	Marlene J. Marshall
Helen Burk	Jane MacDonald
Marian Clark	Jeannine Hack
Dianne Monteith	Janice Chisholm
Rosanne Wadsworth	Jeanette Pastorius
Penny Stevenson	Jette Collins

Karen Tierney, Membership

SPRING FASHION SHOW

Last April, we were treated to a wonderful Fashion Show organized by **Charlene Kivell, Kathryn Patton, Dianne Heatherington & Nancy Bell**.

Sandy O'Brien and Cathy Caves commentated for our six models of clothes from Zack's Fashions, Westmount Mall. They were Ruth Clifford, Lynda Faulkner, Janet Fisher, Maureen Graham, Maria Abusow-Pas and Donna Newcombe. Also, two of our members, Pat Malone and Dorothy Sample modelled vintage fashions from their own closets.

All the models were thanked with a bouquet, while being soundly applauded for their poise as much as for the fashions.



Charlene Kivell

A BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION



Doreen (Mia) Poole celebrated her 100th birthday last July, Mary Maxwell, Cathy Harrison and Nancy Bell took gifts from RWTO.

OUR WEB-SITE

Every month the London-Middlesex Branch web-site is updated with current photos. Please check out the web-site regularly. Go to www.RWTO.org. Click on Branch News, scroll down to Area 3, select London-Middlesex. Scroll down to see our tabs, HOME, ABOUT, GALLERY etc., Gallery has the most photos.

Janice Thielenhous, Communications

SECOND WEDNESDAY BOOK CLUB

Our Book Club enjoys lively discussions and we always enjoy sharing our "Favourite Summer Reads" when we re-convene in September.

The autobiography **Bossypants**, by Tina Fey is a light, amusing book to read. Tina explores her experiences in the entertainment industry, which shows that to become successful in the entertainment field requires a lot of hard work and tenacity, which is a good life lesson for anyone.

Another entertaining book that we enjoyed was **The House on Fortune Street**, by Margot Livesey, which is comprised of well-written stories about the various characters who have inhabited the house over a period of time. The author's characterizations were well done and authentic and the reader meets many memorable and quirky personalities living very human lives.

Swing Time, by Zadie Smith was a more challenging read that evoked a lot of discussion. The story follows two young women of mixed race through secondary school and beyond, and who have quite different personalities and parental relationships. The novel explores many issues including racism, daughter-parent relationships, and celebrity charity work in third world countries. The story is narrated by one of the two main characters, and it was interesting to note that the reader never discovers the name of the narrator. Our club discussed this and a number of theories were put forth as to the author's purpose. The club members found this book more difficult to "get into" because the author uses the narrative convention of alternating between past and present for each chapter; however, once this method became more obvious, we found this book to be well worth reading, even if it did leave us with a lot of questions.

Jackie Kinder

FIRST THURSDAY BOOK CLUB

We are now heading into our 8th year of discussing chosen books together each month at a member's home. We are very familiar with the quirks and strategies of managing a Book Club long term, and our coffee, tea and snacks have become such a spread we now call it "lunch"!

Firstly, we are beginning to exhaust the "**Book Club in a Bag**" supply from the London Public Library and eagerly await new titles. Booking six months in advance by phone to a library assistant has helped, but we have developed other strategies such as choose-your-own favourite author, then read a biography to share, and also "a group author study".

Librarians are very helpful when you need to reserve a collection for an author study - offering long-term renewals.

In November we read the novels of British author **Jacqueline Winspear**. Her series of detective mysteries featuring Maisie Dobbs is set in the time period 1914 - 1939. Carefully researched, compassionate, well-drawn characters and fascinating history in an interesting plot will keep you turning the pages.

Other books we recommend from last year's selections are:

The Midwife of Venice (set in 16th century Venice), by Roberta Rich; **The Stone Mattress**, by Margaret Atwood; **Me Before You** (a movie version on cable TV was helpful for discussion and comparisons), by JoJo Moyes; and lastly, **The Best Kind of People**, by Canadian author/poet Zoe Whittall, which we found a most timely story.

We encourage other RWTO members to form their own Book Club enabling the enjoyment of friendship and the love of literature, challenging new ideas, and information.

The **First Thursday group** is ready to support you as you begin.

Janet Wombwell and Cathy Harrison

FRIENDSHIP ACTIVITIES

Everyone is Welcome! Meet new friends!

Mon,	Feb. 11, 9:30 a.m. Breakfast, Katie's Kitchen, Oxford St. East
Tues,	Feb. 19, Lunch at Milestones & Movie Afternoon at Silver City Cinemas
Thurs,	Feb. 28, Board Game Night at Dianne Heatherington's
Tues,	Mar. 12, 9:30 a.m. Breakfast at Katie's Kitchen,
Thurs.,	Mar. 21, Tour & Lunch at the Art Gallery
Wed,	Apr. 10, 9:30 a.m. Breakfast at Katie's Kitchen April Bus Tour, TBA
Mon,	May 13, 9:30 a.m. Breakfast, Village Pantry, Lambeth
Sun,	Jun. 2, ACO Heritage Walking Tour
Tues,	Jun. 11, 9:30 a.m. Breakfast at the Village Pantry
Thurs,	Jun. 20, Lunch & Huron Country Playhouse - Thoroughly Modern Millie
Wed,	Jul. 10, 9:30 a.m. Breakfast at the Village Pantry
Wed,	Jul. 17, Whistling Gardens, Wilsonville, carpooling
Mon,	Aug.12, 9:30 a.m. Breakfast at the Open Kitchen
Tues,	Sep.10, 9:30 a.m. Breakfast at the Open Kitchen
Wed.	Oct. 9, 9:30 a.m. Breakfast at the Open Kitchen

Please watch for further details through the Friendship Group email/phone contacts.

The Executive

LUNCHEON MEETINGS



Gathering for Lunch.



Perusing the photos on display.

Selecting a book for purchase, choices, choices!



Final Note:

Many thanks to Bernarda Norwood for her photos in this edition and on the website. Also thanks to the many columnists in the newsletter and the proofreaders, Nancy Bell and Mary Maxwell.

Janice Thielenhaus, Editor