

Niagara Falls Branch May 2020 Newsletter

In 2019-2020, members of our Niagara Falls branch enjoyed the general meetings/luncheons we held at Betty's Restaurant before the current emergency orders came into effect. In December, we were pleased to host Provincial President Karen Clark-Lauzon and Area 13 Director Kathy Smith at our Christmas gathering. Members Carol Morningstar, Linda Dueck, Isla Robson, Jackie Sanche, and Mary Houston entertained us with their creative renditions of Christmas songs and then led us in a lively singalong. At our February Valentine's Social, after a wonderful buffet lunch, members discussed their suggestions for future presentations. We also recognized our latest "Over 90" members, Margaret Holmes and Helen Macdonald. In April, we had hoped to hold a joint meeting with Niagara South for a presentation by handwriting analyst Elaine Charal. Unfortunately, because of restrictions resulting from COVID-19, we had to cancel that meeting. We have also cancelled our May AGM, when we would have installed our officers for 2020-2021 and held our annual penny sale. As well, we are disappointed that we can't come together at our annual picnic in July, which has always been a fun occasion.

As we do every year, in 2019-2020 the Niagara Falls branch supported RWTO/OERO's socially conscious policy of **recognition** through our community outreach and In Memoriam donations. We donated to Niagara Nutrition Partners, Eventide Home, the Royal Canadian Legion Poppy Fund, and Education Foundation Niagara.

To **recruit** new members, last summer Linda Dueck contacted retired women teachers to invite them to join our branch. She also sent welcome e-mails to new members. As well, Linda attended the RTO Farewell to the Bell luncheon to promote our branch. Before our luncheon meetings, we also reached out to prospective members by publicizing our events online in *Niagara This Week* and on the television channel YourTV.

The Branch is also active in **retaining** members through staying in touch. Stephanie Nielsen keeps members informed through submissions to update our web page, and Sherri Stokes keeps members current about Manulife insurance plans. Cheryl Wyllie sends cards for special occasions, get well cards, "thinking of you cards," and sympathy cards. Jackie Sanche arranges for the entertaining and enriching presentations at our luncheon meetings, and Mavis Doherty organizes the callers who contact all members to remind them of upcoming events. After our meetings, Isla Robson e-mails copies of the minutes to members who have e-mail and makes print copies available to members at the next meeting. Finally, Ruth Buchanan coordinates our Movie Group and Luncheon Group. We are grateful to all of them for their service to the branch.

Although COVID-19 is curtailing our activities for the present, the Executive remains connected to members through written communications and telephone calls. We are looking forward to being together again when the emergency ends.

Diane Ewen
President, Niagara Falls Branch