



Retired Women Teachers of Ontario / Organisation des Enseignantes Retraitées de l'Ontario

President's Message

As a new season begins, the hot and humid days of summer make way for crisper days, the sensational colours of fall and a fresh start to another school year.

I am very optimistic, as we move forward with care and resilience as your new President. It is a pleasure to serve with our 2021-2022 Board of Directors, a motivated and hard-working team, who will work diligently and thoughtfully on your behalf.

This year, we experienced a very different and historic Annual General Meeting and Convention. Thanks to the technical support and skills of many enthusiastic members, we engaged in several important resolutions, enjoyed informative workshops and celebrated with lively entertainment.

The use of technology and social media have been trending upwards for many years and our members have embraced these challenges with enthusiasm and determination. Some groups explored potential travel destinations, attended online interest classes or joined in virtual workshops. Several branches invited interesting speakers using Zoom or social media platforms. Friends searched local websites for food delivery services to support each other and used online shopping to avoid crowded stores. Many of you made personal contacts by phone, special cards, porch

visits or email. Thank you for the creative ways you reached out and demonstrated our "Caring and Sharing" motto.

I recently discovered an interesting article by researchers from the University of Montreal. It states that seniors, who played 3D video platform games, increased the health of their brains in areas responsible for healthy cognition,

memory, balance and motor control, along with planning and decision-making. What fun to give it a try!

We have an eager team who will support you in expanding your technology repertoire. Kathy Gallagher, our Website Convenor, will be hosting an online "Koffee Klatch", as well as presenting sessions on Working With Images, the Zoom Platform and Branch Facebook Pages. Jan Murdoch, our Newsletter Convenor, is offering monthly workshops involving Genealogy and is available to assist anyone with their newsletter and/or mailchimp for mass email mailings. Do check out Hope Leon's workshop, "Let's Do PR",



Nancy Bell,
Provincial President

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

Provincial President:

Nancy Bell
519-452-3596
n3bell@rogers.com

First Vice-President:

Judy Drummond
613-275-1354
jjdrum@xplornet.com

Insurance Convenor:

Karin Mussen
519-272-0629
kmussen.rwto@gmail.com

Manulife Financial 1-800-268-3763

Broker: Terry Kennedy
The Dolphin Consulting Group
519-583-0098 • Fax: 519-583-2876
tkennedy34@bell.net

Provincial Office

Executive Secretary-Treasurer:

Linda Huffman
2736 Twelfth Conc,
Tecumseh, ON, N8N 0H9
Toll Free: 1-877-607-6696
Phone: 519-979-7030
Email: info@rwto.org
Website: www.RWTO.org

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President's Message – continued

shown under Highlights of the Convention on our website. Her practical ideas inspire us to try different media platforms to reach prospective new members.

We are all at different stages of using technology and recognize that there is a learning curve and comfort level for each person. Congratulations on your stellar efforts!

Most importantly, the valued input and innovative ideas received from our membership help us to unite

and move forward as a strong, dynamic provincial organization. Together, we grow stronger.

I look forward to making personal connections with you across this beautiful province and wish everyone a wonderful RWTO/OERO year.

Nancy Bell, Provincial President

Convention 2021 – “Staying Connected”

The 2021 Convention was scheduled to be held in Sault Ste. Marie and hosted by Sudbury, Central Algoma, and Sault Ste. Marie Branches. Convention plans began to take shape; however, at the September 2020 Provincial Board of Directors meeting, a motion was carried to cancel the ‘in person’ Convention, due to the unpredictable situation related to the Covid-19 pandemic. Thank you to Joyce Ratz and the Convention Committee who exemplified their theme, “Algoma Rocks!”

On October 9th, the Provincial Convention Committee began weekly meetings to plan for a 2021 Virtual Convention and did so with abundant enthusiasm! A special thank you to Kathy Gallagher and Judith Bennoch who led the Convention Team and gave numerous technology workshops to support the attendees in this new virtual experience. For the first time ever, RWTO/OERO members at large were invited to attend many aspects of the Convention!

On standby throughout the Convention were the Telephone Hotline Assistants. Thank you Henedine Weiman (bilingual), Linda Huffman and Mardie Panabaker for your support!

The Convention ‘kicked off’ with a virtual song, “Who Loves You”, sung by RWTO/OERO members representing 27 branches from across the province and led by the Project Coordinator, Judith Bennoch. What talent! Nancy Papiez gave her first ever Convention Keynote Address with an important message about the

future of RWTO/OERO. Suzanne Rondeau had fun announcing virtual ‘spin draw’ prizes throughout the Convention!

The AGM Meeting was held on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday mornings. Committee reports were given, delegates eagerly debated resolutions, Linda Huffman screen shared her Financial Report and Budget, and Terry Kennedy presented the Return of Premiums cheque from the Manulife Insurance Plan.

Tuesday afternoon’s webinar workshops included Strawberry Season Cooking, Genealogy Research through Colour Coding, Let’s Do PR, Wine Tasting and more! That evening, comedian Joe Pillitteri incited much laughter as we joined him virtually with pizza and our favourite beverage. We toured Canada’s Wild North, rode the Rocky Mountaineer Train, and visited Egypt and Ireland on Wednesday afternoon. Mardie Panabaker led members in “The Jerusalem Challenge” dance. What great fun! There was also a Special Event Fashion Show! The Liverpool 4 took us for a walk down memory lane with brilliant renditions of our Beatles’ favourites on Wednesday evening.

Thursday afternoon was truly special! Susan Rose led us in a beautiful In-Memoriam themed, “Teachers as Heroes.” Judy Drummond honoured our 286 Over 90 members with Certificates of Appreciation. Joyce Ratz presented the awards and Lois Lockhart led us through the installment of the 2021-2022 Board of Directors. Nancy Bell, our 66th Provincial President, gave a warm

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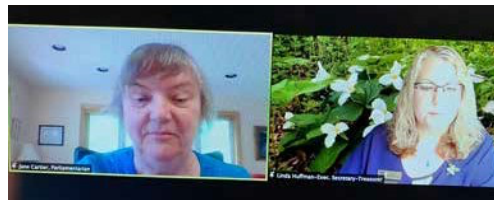
Convention 2021– “Staying Connected” - continued

welcome and ‘vision’ speech followed by a fun and ‘uplifting’ Call to Convention 2022.

Thanks to Kathy Gallagher, we can relive the Convention Events on our website under “Highlights of Convention 2021.”

This year’s 2021 Virtual Convention will certainly go down in history! Thank you to all RWTO/OERO delegates and members who participated and made it happen!

Nancy Papiez, Past Provincial President





Honorary Membership Award Report

The Honorary Membership Award is RWTO/OERO's highest honour. It is given for outstanding service at the Provincial level. We are pleased to honour Kathy Gallagher and Nancy Papiez.

Kathy Gallagher

(Windsor-Essex Branch)

Kathy started her Provincial journey as Communication Website Convenor in 2016. She exemplifies dedication, leadership, and forward thinking. Her creativity and enthusiasm have resulted in several improvements to branch websites, and also, a very impressive Provincial website. She shared her skills willingly, performing tasks that, in the past, were referred to a professional. We appreciate her efforts to minimize our spending costs.

During her time on the Provincial Board, Kathy promoted, and created, "Members Rocking Retirement", a feature on the website that provides a format for showcasing some of the outstanding talents that our members have brought to their retirement years. In addition to her other duties, she agreed to chair the "Social Media Ad Hoc Committee", tasked with developing guidelines for our online content.

Her technical presence at Conventions is obvious, as it is part of every aspect, from agendas to presentations to the Memorial Service. When Covid interrupted our 2020 Kingston plans, Kathy was instrumental in taking our AGM online. More recently she volunteered to be Convenor for this year's, first ever, Virtual Convention, complete with tours and entertainment.

Kathy is rocking her retirement and will always be "Cyberlady" to us.

Congratulations Kathy and thank you!



including Guidelines for Branches, Duties of Area Directors, Voting and Election Procedure Handbooks, and a few more not listed here.

In 4 years of service as Program Coordinator, Nancy created timeline documents for Branch Presidents and Area Directors to help them organize their responsibilities. Her contributions to the AGM were evident to everyone involved, as she worked endlessly to make the whole meeting process run smoothly.

More recently, Nancy served as Second Vice-President, where she was Goodwill Convenor, and First Vice-President, where she chaired the Resolutions Committee. This year, as Provincial President, she faced the challenges of Covid and Zoom. She kept a positive attitude and encouraged others to do the same. She learned and shared with grace and patience.

Nancy has proven herself to be a hard-working leader,

dedicated to "Caring and Sharing".
Congratulations Nancy and thank you!

Respectfully submitted,
Lois Lockhart



Nancy Papiez

(Hamilton/Wentworth Branch)

Nancy started her Provincial journey as Convenor of the 2013 Convention, hosted by Hamilton-Wentworth. Her leadership and organizational skills, as well as her commitment to keep processes efficient, were evident. During that year, she also volunteered to chair the Convention Handbook Revisions Committee. She has since chaired several other Provincial committees,



Award Winners 2021

Feather In Your Hat Award

The Feather in Your Hat Award was established by the Membership Committee to recognize creative, innovative and successful activities carried out by a branch or group of branches who have worked cooperatively on 1 current or on-going project that has clearly enriched the programs offered by RWTO/OERO. (revised October 2014)

Submissions for the award must be made to the Membership Convenor after January 1 and before March 1, 2022. They should include area and branch name(s), total number of members, number of members involved in the project, clear identification of the project, ongoing photos from start to finish and outcomes of the project.

In order to ensure that the submission has been received, notify the Membership Convenor by email and send the submission (i.e. hard copy) by mail. The Membership Convenor will confirm its arrival by email.

We received an amazing 10 submissions for the “Feather in Your Hat” Award and three were honored at the virtual AGM 2021.

Durham North Branch filled 100 ‘Purses for Sisters’ with useful, uplifting items for local women who have experienced domestic violence. They included CO-VID masks, a friendly handwritten note and were delivered safely to front porches.



We encourage all branches to come up with innovative ideas for keeping our membership numbers high in this unprecedented Covid 19 pandemic! Newsletters, pictures and contests will be helpful!

car during the day! Two new charities have been added, “Purses for Margaret” and “Soles for Souls” to their Spring Charity Drive on May 12th!

Sudbury Branch, although small, sewed 50 colorful “Pocket Pillows” and are making more for hospitalized children – a project near and dear to teachers’ hearts – at Health Sciences North! Each special pocket is filled with books and bookmarks that thrill both children and parents!



Hamilton-Wentworth Branch organized a well thought-out, non-contact Charity Drive Thru and Drop Off at a local Ancaster Grocery Store parking lot. They opened their car trunks, advertised well and had to make several overflowing runs with each

Barbara Bain Membership Award

The Barbara Bain Awards were also presented and received virtually at the AGM 2021. Certificates were sent to the respective Branch winners.

Tier 3
3rd – Rendezvous
2nd – Dundalk-Highpoint
1st – Brockville

Tier 2
3rd – Tie – Palmerston
3rd – Tie – Orillia
2nd – Durham North
1st – Haldimand

Tier 1
1st – St. Thomas-Elgin

Note: The RWTO/OERO Website has been revamped so that the AGM Awards videos will be in the **MEMBERSHIP** section under the page heading, **Awards**.

Respectfully Submitted
Evelyn Martin, Membership Convenor

Members at Large: Cathy Harrison (London-Middlesex), Joyce Ratz (Central Algoma), Nancy Strutt (Flesherton), Anne Graham (Lanark).



Insurance Matters

IMPORTANT INFORMATION TO SHARE WITH HOSPITAL and HOME CARE PLAN MEMBERS

This certainly has been a year of changes and I have a few procedural changes to share with Hospital and Home Care Plan members.

1. When a plan member has a need for nursing services at home as a result of injury or illness under the advice of a physician, she or he can receive the services of a registered nurse, a practical nurse or a personal support worker (provided that the services are not rendered by an immediate family member) who does not normally live in the plan member's home. Please note that services must include substantive elements of personal care, be certified as medically necessary and can only be done in your primary residence to



be eligible. NEW – You must now send Manulife a **Prior Authorization Form** signed by a physician or nurse practitioner. Manulife will advise you of the approval for the type of caregiver and the

duration of eligible services. If your need is urgent or immediate, contact the Call Centre at 1-877-222-7340 for verbal authorization. You can find the Prior Authorization Form on the RWTO website (rwto.org/membership/insuranceplans/priorauthorizationform) or you can call the Call Centre and have one mailed to you.

Why is this change being made? Manulife has negotiated with some major home care providers for preferential access and rates and are now able to recommend qualified caregivers for home care nursing services. This new procedure applies across all of Manulife's health insurance plans.

2. Changing or updating your Credit Card information for premium payments? Please contact Manulife at 1-877-222-7340. You will be directed to a licensed insurance advisor who will record

this information and ensure the change is made. Previously members could mail this information to Manulife or simply call the Call Centre and the Service Representative would take this information. New procedures have been enacted across the entire Insurance Industry and require that licensed advisors take this information as it was determined to be a more secure means to safeguard credit card information against fraudulent use.

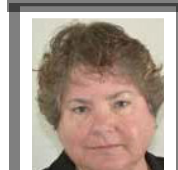
3. If you haven't yet received your new Hospital and Home Care Identification Card you can contact Manulife directly at 1-877-222-7340 to arrange to have one sent to you. Please confirm your mailing address with the Customer Service Representative when doing so.

Finally, your insurance team welcomes LeAnne Taylor as your new Assistant Provincial Insurance Convenor and thanks Karin Mussen for moving into the role of Provincial Insurance Convenor. We also give a big thank you to Anne Wilde for serving as Provincial Insurance Convenor for the past two years.

Insurance Convenor
Karin Mussen
519-272-0629
kmussen.rwto@gmail.com

Assistant Insurance Convenor
LeAnne Taylor
905-877-7030
haw_taylor@hotmail.com

Manulife Financial 1-800-268-3763
Broker: Terry Kennedy
The Dolphin Consulting Group
(519) 583-0098 Fax: (519) 583-2876
tkennedy34@bell.net



Resolutions for 2021 Virtual Annual General Meeting

Branch Resolutions for 2021 Annual General Meeting

Resolution # 1 (from Windsor-Essex)

Be it resolved that Policy and Procedures RWTO/OERO document section III, Finance Policies, 3 Fees, b Fee Rebates to Branches i “The annual branch rebate per paid Provincial member shall be 25% of the membership fee, commencing with the 2008-2009 membership year. The rebate on the fifteen dollar membership fee shall remain at \$8” be amended to read,

“The annual Branch rebate per paid Provincial member shall be 40% of the membership fee, commencing with the 2021-2022 membership year. The rebate on the \$15 membership fee shall remain at \$8 for those members who retired on or before August 31, 1980.”

Amendment (2) to Resolution 1

Be it resolved that the RWTO/OERO Board of Directors set up an Ad Hoc Committee, including branch members, to investigate the percentage of Provincial fees rebated to the branches and the direct impact on Provincial fees and that this Ad Hoc Committee forward a resolution at the AGM in 2022.

Carried.

Resolution #2 (from Daisy Wilson Coldwater)

Be it resolved that Article IX, Branch Organization, be amended by the addition of 10

“Whenever possible, endeavour to ensure that RWTO/OERO Branch meetings and events take place in a location or facility that is accessible to all.”

Carried.

Resolution #3 (from Daisy Wilson Coldwater)

Be it resolved that Article V, Duties of the Board of Directors, 2 Board of Directors, be amended by the addition of f, “Whenever possible, endeavour to ensure that RWTO/OERO Provincial meetings and events take place in a location or facility that is accessible to all.”

Motion # 10 to Resolution # 3.

That Resolution #3 be referred to the Board of Directors for further study and that the Board of Directors report back with suggested wording at the AGM 2022.

Carried.

Resolution #4 (from Windsor-Essex)

The Windsor-Essex revised the original Resolution that was published, in consultation with the Parliamentarian, who deemed it did not change its original intent.

Be it resolved that Policy and Procedures document Appendix c 3 13 “Visit Branches at the request of either party within a

two-year period.”

Amendment (2) to Resolution # 4

Be it resolved that Policy and Procedures RWTO/OERO document Appendix c 3 13 “Visit Branches at the request of the branch” be amended to read, “Visit Branches at the request of either party within a two-year period, either physically or virtually.”

Carried.

Resolution #5 (from London-Middlesex)

Be it resolved that Article X Annual Meeting be amended by the addition of a new section 7, Honorary Delegates. The current sections 7 and 8 will be renumbered to 8 and 9, consecutively.

“Any Past Provincial President attending the Annual General Meeting will be considered an Honorary Delegate.

- a. They may speak to resolutions and motions to assist in clarifications in a discussion.
- b. They will have no voting privileges.
- c. They will be responsible for their own Convention expenses

“Any Past Provincial President attending the Annual General Meeting, not as a voting delegate, will be considered an Honorary Delegate.”

Carried.

Resolution #6 Sales and Materials Convenor

Be it resolved that Article VII Duties of Other Members of the Board of Directors, 5 Sales and Materials Convenor, The Sales and Materials Convenor shall: be amended with the addition of,

- a. Collaborate with Area Directors to track and manage distribution of Membership and Cora Bailey pins on an annual basis,
- b. Manage all aspects of the sales of RWTO/OERO pins and materials during the year and at a display at the Annual General Meeting and convention,
- c. Maintain records of all sales and inventory, and
- d. recommend purchases as required to maintain inventory and suggest new items for consideration.

Carried.

Resolution #7 Appointed Committees /Convenors

This Resolution was WITHDRAWN by the Board of Directors.

Resolution #8 Duties of Other Members of the Board of Directors

Continued ►



Resolutions for 2021 Virtual Annual General Meeting – continued

Due to the withdrawal of Resolution #7, the Parliamentarian ruled that this Resolution was Out of Order.

Board Resolutions #9 Elections

Be it resolved that Article IV Organization, 4 Elections (b) “If more than one candidate is nominated for any position then a secret ballot shall be held. Election of these candidates shall be by majority vote of the delegates present at the Annual Meeting” be amended to read,

“If more than one candidate is nominated for any position then a secret ballot shall be held. Election of these candidates shall be by majority vote of the registered delegates at the Annual Meeting.”

Carried.

Resolution #10 Annual Meeting

Be it resolved that Article X Annual Meeting, 1 “There shall be an Annual Meeting of RWTO/OERO in June of each year” be amended to read,

“There shall be an Annual Meeting of RWTO/OERO in June of each year. Refer to the Voting and Election Procedures Handbook for details.”

Carried.

Board Resolution #11 Quorum

Be it resolved that Article X Annual Meeting, 3 Quorum “A quorum for the Annual Meeting shall be (50%) of the registered delegates” be amended to read,

3. Definitions

a) Quorum

A quorum for the Annual Meeting shall be (50%) of the eligible delegates.

b) Eligible Delegates

Eligible delegates who may attend the convention are based on paid membership numbers for each branch.

c) Registered Delegate

An eligible delegate becomes a registered delegate upon receipt of her voting card at the convention.

Carried.

Board Resolution #12 Voting Delegates

Be it resolved that Article X Annual Meeting, 5 Voting Delegates, c “Each Branch is entitled to delegates according to the following formula” be amended to read,

“Each Branch is entitled to eligible delegates according to the following formula.”

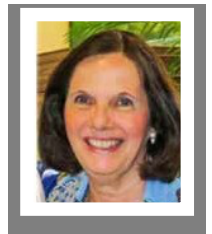
Carried.

Board Resolution #13 Election and Appointments of Board Members

Be it resolved that Article X Annual Meeting, 8 “The election of officers and the appointment of the other members of the Board of Directors shall take place at the Annual Meeting” be deleted.

Carried.

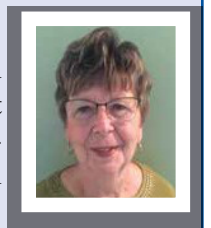
Respectfully submitted by: Nancy Bell,
President



Branch Resolutions for 2022 Annual General Meeting

Resolutions for the 2022 Annual General Meeting must be submitted to Judy Drummond, Convenor of the Resolutions Committee, by November 15, 2021. Each resolution submitted should be clear, concise and must contain one key idea or focus. (Policy and Procedures Article V11 Resolutions). You will find the newest edition of our constitution on the www.rwto.org website. When your branch is preparing to submit a resolution, questions and concerns should be directed to Judy Drummond, 1st Vice-President or Jane Cartier, Parliamentarian. acecartier1@gmail.com

Judy Drummond
1st Vice-President
613-275-1354
jjdrum@xplornet.com



Issues and Concerns – “Organizing Your Life”

In my last few articles in Connections, I have written about estate planning and powers of attorney. They are both necessary provisions to ensure that your estate is taken care of according to your wishes.

As a follow up, I was contacted by Christine Roberts, South Bruce, who shared with me how the information was relevant for her at that time. With her permission, I have included her personal story and the importance of preparing for your estate and will.

My father, John Andrew Madill, died in January 2021. COVID-19 wasn't the cause but pandemic restrictions made the situation doubly heart-breaking because I couldn't visit and communication was difficult. Fortunately, he was an organized person who recognized his mortality and did everything possible to ease the burden of his passing. We had had many conversations in the years prior and I had a file with notes. We even worked together on a draft of his obituary. When the seriousness of the pandemic became clear in the spring of 2020, my father reviewed all his documentation and provided me with a binder containing copies of account information for pension, life, home and auto insurance, banks and investments, utilities, funeral home arrangements, wills and property title. He gathered important documents such as passports, social security cards and their birth and

marriage certificates together in one secure location and made sure I knew its whereabouts. In the days and weeks following his passing, my mother and I filed the paperwork and made the necessary changes with relative ease leaving us space to grieve without the stress of searching for information – a final gift from my father.

Thanks to Christine for sharing her story in hopes that we all can be as organized as her father.

Personally, a few years ago, I received a practical booklet that has assisted me in collecting and listing important personal and financial information about myself. I can record and organize documents and information about my home and safety deposit box. It includes contacts such as lawyer, executor, power of attorney as well as sections on property, insurance, banking, investments, income sources and household accounts. It is called “*Family Documents*” by Walter and Esther Dueck. There are other similar resources available such as “*Information My Family Needs to Know Organizer*” by New Seasons, “*Peace of Mind Planner*” by

Peter Pauper Press and many others.

Kathy Smith,
Area 13 Director



Goodwill

Hello to all members of RWTO/OERO.

It is my pleasure as Provincial Goodwill Convenor for the 2021-2022 year to send birthday greetings to our members who are over ninety years old. There are currently 272 members in this exclusive club.

Nine of these members will join the 100 Club during the 2021 year. That brings the grand total of 100+ year old's to 17! An amazing number!

It will be my honour to stay in touch with these remarkable women throughout the next year. In addition to recognizing birthdays, we send Christmas

cards and greetings. The ladies will also receive cheerful poems and messages in the spring.

All of these distinguished women deserve to be recognized, so please help me keep our database current. Please notify Linda Huffman of any changes in their personal information.

Sandy Salerno, Provincial Goodwill
Convenor/2nd Vice-President
smsalerno@rogers.com





Program

Welcome to Fall Presidents and Area Directors!

A year ago we were scrambling trying to figure out how we could encourage membership renewal and keep our members feeling connected and valued. In that you excelled! The creativity demonstrated across the province and your willingness to embrace technology, where possible, exceeded expectations! **Zoom** has now become a staple for multiple branches and used for many different purposes.

This fall, your Annual Area Presidents meetings with your Area Director may be happening 'live' or 'virtual' and may be a meeting combined with, or separate from, Insurance. This will differ across the province depending on the format used.

The **Timelines for Presidents** sent out in **July** provide a guide for you to follow throughout the year. It is strongly suggested that you print this document for easy reference. Monthly, from October to **May**, I will also send out an "**At A Glance Calendar**" as a reminder of key tasks and important due dates. These documents work hand in hand and I encourage you to

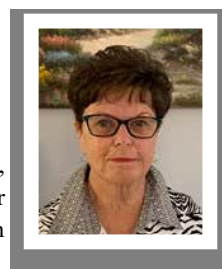
be sure to read the **Special Notes** and **Additional Suggestions** provided at the end of the Timelines. They provide additional information to assist you in your role.

As you start the 2021-2022 Membership year, '**resilience**' will continue to be needed as we work our way through, hopefully, the final stages of the pandemic.

Your Area Director is your liaison with the Provincial Board and is ready and willing to assist you on your journey and as always, I am here for you as well.

My wish for this year is to be able to meet as many of you as possible and share some much needed **Laughter - in Person** - at Convention 2022 in London.

Judith Bennoch,
Provincial Program Coordinator
rwtoprogramcoordinator@gmail.com



Website

RWTO/OERO

Upcoming Workshops

Open To All Members

Kathy Gallagher
rwtocyberlady@gmail.com

Register for a session or sessions on:
rwto.org/branches/communication-convenors

Archives

A special "Thank You" goes out to our Area Directors for participating in the "In Memoriam" virtual service at our June Convention. We honoured our members respectfully, each area offering a yellow rose in memory of our departed colleagues and friends. Even though we could not assemble in person, it was important for us all to take part.

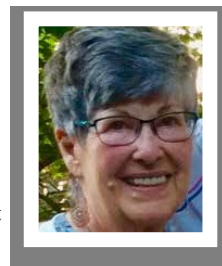
Branches may now start sending in photos to me anytime for the In Memoriam service June 2022.

Please submit each member's picture separately in jpg format

with the name clearly attached. Include your branch name or area. If you do not have a photo you can send me the link to the member's obituary and I can download the picture. Only public domain photos will be published.

All announcements or inquiries can be sent to Susan Rose mumkat@aol.com

Susan Rose, Provincial Archivist



Genealogy Opportunity

Thank you to everyone who joined me at Convention 2021. I enjoyed sharing my techniques for colour coding in my Genealogy research. As promised, we are now starting a RWTO/OERO Genealogy Provincial Group, meeting once each month to share successful techniques. Perhaps later we may try solving some problems together. Everyone will have an opportunity to share preferred websites and strategies. There will also be lots of time for questions and general dialoguing within the group.

Our first Zoom meeting will be on Sept. 30, 2021 at 10 a.m.. Our guest speaker will be Dianne Miles, member with Hamilton-Wentworth Branch. Dianne's family includes a Bernardo Child, her maternal grandfather. She will share her discovery and the process she followed to collect the supporting documentation. Quite an interesting Journey.

Our second meeting will be Oct 28, 2021 at 10 a.m., and our guest speaker will be Judy Massey, member with Daisy Wilson Coldwater Branch. Judy's family tree revealed a family secret known only to her paternal grandmother, who was deceased when the discovery was made. Judy

made her discovery through DNA matching. She did some excellent research, and she will share some of her techniques and websites used as she explored her family lineage.

The focus of our meeting on Nov 25, 2021 at 10 a.m. will be DNA clustering. We will visit two sites, Gedmatch and DNA Painter, to explore how these sites help with the clustering process.

If you are interested in attending one or all of the Zoom Genealogy meetings you can either call me 905-6921-8407 or send me an email rwtoconnections@gmail.com There are no costs to participants.

I will send you an invitation to the Zoom meeting, on the Tuesday prior to the meeting date.

Submitted by Jan Murdoch,
Newsletter Convenor



Membership

There was a time when I thought computers need not be a part of my life. It was a fad. I had more important things to do. After all, I was a teacher. But "the times they are a changin'."

The pandemic has changed the way we do business, buy groceries, do our banking and yes, meet with friends and colleagues. It is the way our organization has managed not only to hold on, but to grow. Branches across Ontario have managed to reach their members in so many creative ways and have used technology to do it. Our Annual General Meeting was a total success because branch members and delegates embraced new skills, learned from others, and taught others the skills needed to do that. Bravo to all that did! We all needed help to learn these techniques and luckily there are so many that are ready to help. You may still need help. If you are concerned about reaching your membership using "new" programs like Zoom, let me help you. Please contact me and I will reach out to all the helping hands out there that helped me.

We need to think about the longevity of RWTO/OERO as we age. New members need to see that we are a vibrant organization, with so many activities for them to enjoy. We cannot stop learning, or we will miss the new and younger retirees coming up. One branch recently shared a newsletter with me that drew members' attention to only two workshops from our AGM. How astute, rather than just saying, "Look at the provincial website." Bring people on board gradually, as they may be reluctant learners. Presidents, please ensure that your website is current. Share your branch's activities. Take advantage of the technology-related skills of your members. And attempt

some of the strategies outlined in the "Let's Do PR" workshop on our website, RWTO/OERO.org, under Highlights of Convention 2021.

Evelyn Martin, Area 4 Director,
Membership Convenor



News from the Branches – Resilience “Broadening Your Technology Repertoire”

Area 1

Dundalk-Highpoint

A year and a half into the pandemic and Dundalk- Highpoint Branch continues to demonstrate its resilience. Since our branch is very small it is easy to keep in touch with all the members, and it was important to meet people at their comfort level. After a survey of our members it was decided that our communication would continue to be primarily by email, rather than Zoom meetings. For the members without technology, a newsletter is sent out via “snail-mail”. Special occasion cards have also been sent out, especially to those who have Life Memberships, just to keep in touch. When needed, a phone call is always a way to connect, or a quick text or Facebook message. Our Branch still plans to discuss amalgamation with the Flesherton Branch and they have extended an invitation to attend their recent Zoom meetings. We are all looking forward to in-person meetings!

Connie McInnes, Branch President

Flesherton

Resilience. A word that describes how society has coped over this last year. The Flesherton and Area branch has been resilient through these trying times. We continue to have 21 active members and have kept in contact through a variety of ways. Newsletters were used at first and then in April, our branch decided to try a Zoom meeting. It was so inspiring to see each other again and we were able to decide how to distribute money to our usual charities. The need at the Food bank, Women’s Crisis Centre and other local volunteer services has drastically increased during the pandemic. Our branch is always willing to help. Due to everyone lending a hand with technology, a member who usually joins by phone was able to do it virtually for the first time. The members also wanted to continue our secret pal exchange. We are all hoping for an in person September meeting to finalize our amalgamation with Highpoint/Dundalk and continue the “Caring and Sharing” that is so important to our Retired Women Teachers.

Nancy Strutt, Branch President

Owen-Sound

The Owen Sound and Area Branch is pleased to report that, once again, most of our members have chosen to renew memberships.

Technology has definitely helped us this past year enabling our association to stay connected with our members. Our Newsletter Coordinator has been doing double duty to gather articles, poems, pictures, poetry and recipes from members and sharing them, largely in newsletters, sent electronically.

Through the use of our Zoom licence, we have been able to hold virtual General Meetings, where we have focused on members maintaining connections. An Executive member gathered pictures of members’ activities and gardens and arranged them in specially prepared slide shows. Our Christmas meeting featured Christmas crafts and carols sung in the safety of our own homes. Our March meeting featured a motivational speaker, Judy Suke, who was both entertaining and inspirational. In May, we virtually toured “Persephone”, the organic market garden of our speaker, Kristine Hammel.

The ongoing business of our local association continues to be conducted in regular virtual meetings. At this point we have no plans to meet in-person; however, we are eagerly looking forward to doing so when it is safe to resume in person gatherings.

Sue Loyst, Branch President

South Bruce

For the South Bruce Branch, our response to pandemic restrictions was a reflection of the resilience that is in our nature. Early on, the Executive embraced new communication strategies to expand recognition of holidays and the birthdays of more senior members, via both electronic greeting cards and electronic newsletters. For those without internet connectivity, the same information was received in hard copy format and accompanied by personal notes and calls. The provincial RWTO/OERO 3Rs grant was used to purchase a Zoom subscription which provided a reliable platform to hold virtual meetings. Our membership was receptive to the new technology and found it reassuring to see, hear and speak to friends and colleagues from the relative safety of their home. While we certainly missed the personal contact, we were able to conduct branch business and enjoyed several excellent presentations. We actually expanded our schedule as many members enjoyed connecting through regular “book chat” meetings.

Christine Roberts, Branch Secretary

Warton

The pandemic restrictions prevented luncheon meetings as they were cancelled. The Warton Branch members received RWTO/OERO Provincial updates via phone calls and newsletters. The program consisted of monthly mailings to explain and invite members to use their technology to participate in the Senior Centre Without Walls. It included connections via zoom or the telephone from the safety and comfort of one’s home. The program provided trivia, seated fitness, and speakers on health and wellness.

The executive met via teleconferencing. The president sent stamped addressed envelopes with the spring newsletter to ask members to submit their membership dues for 2021-2022. As of July 2021, the membership had fully renewed. The president has supported our resiliency by phoning all members to speak with them. A survey that was sent with a newsletter demonstrated little interest in using zoom technology for meetings. The Warton Branch members look forward to face-to-face meetings in the future.

Marlene Davies, Branch President

Area 4

Brant

In Brant Area 4, phone calls, cards and porch visits with small seasonal gifts have really made a difference during COVID, reminding our members that we are there and we care. Reaching out to our founding FWTAO members who are not as computer savvy and who are more isolated, is a top priority.

Emails are sent monthly to those members who use technology, but a third of our group plus lapsed members get the newsletters by snail mail. RWTO/OERO updates, personal information such as birthdays, deaths, illnesses, local activities and even jokes keep our members well informed.

Our blend of ‘new’ and ‘old fashioned’ makes “In Caring and Sharing” real for our 68 members and 12 associates.

Joan Brent, Branch President

Continued ►

News from the Branches – Resilience “Broadening Your Technology Repertoire” – continued

Haldimand

RWTO/OERO Haldimand Branch continues to reach out to its 90 members and guests. Plans have been made for upcoming events for 2021-2022 and these have been shared via website and newsletter. Invitations shared through email and telephone contact, allowed for our postponed outdoor Gathering in the Park to take place.

Membership renewal occurred via emails and telephone with the first notice being mentioned in the newsletter. Our Branch Treasurer initiated an e-transfer as an option for payment of dues. Haldimand Branch was pleased to receive the Barbara Bain Award for increased membership at the excellent Zoom RWTO/OERO Convention. Our Welcome Reception for new retirees was held outdoors in September. The Canada Post caring postcards were sent again to members and guests in August.

Two new initiatives were put in place: Remembrance Day wreaths were created and will be laid at local Remembrance Day services and an Area 4 Facebook page was created and accessed by Brant, Haldimand and Hamilton-Wentworth Branches.

Joanne Weeks, Branch President

Hamilton-Wentworth

Hamilton-Wentworth Branch members have been fortunate in our quest to embrace technology, as internet services have long been available here, and we have members willing to help others with our tech adventures. A Computer Club led to a monthly iPad Interest Group eight years ago, and now 85% of our members read their branch newsletters on-line every two months. Sooo... how do you reach your members and Interest Group buddies during a pandemic? Several members Zoosoomed to our rescue, enabling Book Clubs, Scrapbooking, Card making, Movie Matinee and even Lunch Bunch to continue meeting face to face, while others like the Euchre and Art Appreciation Groups used apps, email and the internet to participate in games or virtual tours of exhibits across the world. With a branch Zoom account, Past-President Lynn Anderton delighted and informed our membership with workshops presented by humorists and self care enthusiasts, and even arranged our Executive Meetings!

Linda Sargeant, Branch President

Area 7

Belleville

This has been a year for creative problem solving. We met the challenges and developed technological solutions. Zoom became the method by which we connected locally and internationally with others whether for work, play or school. We used Facetime to read stories to grandchildren and kiss them good night. Microsoft Teams allowed our children to do online schooling. Theatre groups created Zoom and YouTube play readings. Vimeo brought live streamed concerts to our living rooms. Acapella, an App from Mixcord, allowed musicians to collaborate with others around the world to create unique videos for us to enjoy. Online shopping became the norm. Emails and phone calls kept our RWTO/OERO members connected. This year's Zoom Convention was a success. A few decades ago, we would have been confined to a life without interaction with others. We are a lucky generation to have a variety of technologies to help us cope during a pandemic.

Lynda Rollins, Branch Communications

Durham North



Thank Goodness for Technology Resilience! This year has certainly helped to push people out of their comfort levels and try new ways to stay connected with one another. We felt it was important to keep in touch with one another and the logical way was through the computer. When I volunteered to be the communications person for Durham North I never dreamed of how important communications would be. Receiving funny emails, beautiful photos and words of inspiration helped not only to keep us connected but also in a positive frame of mind.

While attending the virtual Convention, Jan Murdoch asked that we send her photos of our members participating in some of their favourite activities. I decided that I would use these photos to produce a slideshow set to music (with tech help from my daughter) to share with our members! It had been so long since we had seen one another! Here are a few of the photos.



Wendy Campbell, Branch President

Northumberland South Durham

We found it necessary to alter regular methods of communication because of ongoing lockdowns. Email was used by our Executive to keep in touch, vote on motions and provide members with uplifting, educational or amusing messages. Parents and Grandparents took to Zoom and other options as the only way of “being with” their loved ones. Our Treasurer, Sandra Nolte, devised a method for members to pay fees online. Then came the Convention!! Our Choir member, Vicki Cubitt, had to learn the Zoom recording process to enable her to do the part in the challenging harmony of the opening song. Zoom was used to provide seminars, discuss Resolutions, vote and provide entertainment. Those with no previous experience had to adjust, learn a variety of new skills, become adept at registering, muting and waiting in a queue to voice an opinion. Since each branch has a web page we need a Communications Seat on the Executive, not a Secretary. Our Lynne Snee won the Cora Bailey Award for her work. Younger members added to our technological base and older members, like me, had an abrupt learning curve.

Julia Esford, Branch President

Peterborough

Our lives are being ruled by Covid-19; no get-togethers and no hugs. How to survive? The answer is by using technology. Zoom meant that our regular monthly Let's Do Lunch had no food but lots of friendly chatter, our Bookworms shared their thoughts on the current book and our Executive Meetings resulted in the same good decisions. Unfortunately, Zoom didn't work for our Bridge group, our Merry Mattress Makers had to work individually and our Golf group had to wait for good weather. The Executive kept in touch with our members through frequent newsletters, emails, and e-cards for special occasions! Members without email received weekly phone calls, as well as printed updates and cards sent in the mail. We have survived Covid-19 by “caring and sharing”, together.

Joyce Fee, Branch Communications

Continued ►

News from the Branches – Resilience “Broadening Your Technology Repertoire” – continued

Trenton

We have emerged from the last eighteen months older and wiser. We have used technology to stay connected with friends and family, order groceries, shop for gifts, seek medical advice, work from home, attend school from home, travel virtually, learn new skills and hobbies and record our thoughts, memories, and pictures. We don't know what the future holds or the next direction this pandemic will take but we remain confident in our ability to meet any challenges we encounter. Meetings and get togethers have been a challenge but last fall Book Club members met in an outdoor setting at a member's home. Sheltered by the remains of a couple of stone walls and a roaring campfire the lively literary discussions continued. The stone oven may have been old tech, but the determination and resiliency of our members was on-point.

Nancy Patterson Wickson, Branch President

Area 13

Lincoln West

Today, technology is largely computer science based and learning more of this may seem like a daunting task for us "young folk". Here are some examples of what our members are already using. Ask yourself ... "Do you input information on your microwave, stove top, or oven?" "Do you have a television remote?" "Do you have a coded door lock?" "Do you have a cell phone with FaceTime, a camera, a contact list, or a call history?" "Does your car have GPS, Bluetooth, or other hands free entry?" "If you have a laptop or computer, can you email, write a document, Skype, play games?" If your answer to some of these questions are yes, then good for you! If some are no, then there are some places to learn more. Do what a lot of us do and call the grandkids!!! They love to show their superiority! Be patient! Stay resilient! After they explain it to you at warp speed, call a friend or sign up for a library computer session. There will be other 'senior' attendees you can relate to!!

Diana Bujas, Branch President

Niagara Falls

During the past year, I've accepted that broadening my use of technology is an ongoing process. Having spent many years teaching university courses online, I was comfortable using an asynchronous platform to work with students and GoToMeeting to collaborate with colleagues. When I retired, I thought I'd no longer connect online with others to that extent. However, being a member of RWTO/OERO during COVID-19 proved me wrong. I now connect with the Branch Executive through meetings on Zoom. As well, I've added a group page to my Facebook account to connect with branch members. And although I have lots of experience researching literary criticism online, I now go further afield to research a variety of subjects for daily postings to the group page. As have many members of RWTO/OERO, I've found that, regardless of past experience using online resources, there's always more to learn.

Diane Ewen, Branch President

Niagara South

This pandemic has tested our resilience in ways that we've not experienced before and we have had to adapt. The use of technology has become more important than ever. We have used old technology, like the telephone, to maintain contact with our members. Our callers were

responsible for contacting the members on their list on a regular basis to do wellness checks and offer assistance as needed. A newsletter was introduced that was published every 2 months and sent by e-mail to our members and mailed to those without internet. Two members were featured in each newsletter to introduce them to the membership so we could better get to know each other from a distance. Executive meetings were conducted via Zoom, a new technology for us. Our Treasurer set up the system so that annual fees could be paid via e-transfers. It is likely that we will continue to employ technology and explore new strategies.

Evelyn Bergen, Branch President

St Catharines

St. Catharines Branch was able to remain connected with Zoom, FaceTime or Skype. It was not always easy, as our computer skills were at different levels. Many members embraced this challenge and persevered when the internet wasn't cooperating or when you couldn't find what you wanted. Our branch subscribed to Zoom and we were able to have Executive Meetings remotely. Zoom technology was also used for some of our Activity Groups. Zoom allowed many members in St. Catharines to enjoy this year's Convention.

The website was another way to keep connected. Updates and recent COVID information was posted on the website.

Technology enabled us to reach out to the teachers in the classroom by putting an advertisement in the local newspaper.

This technology will continue to improve and next time there's a snow storm or when you are sick, an option to Zoom or Skype may be just the ticket!

Jessica Thomson, Branch Communications-Website



Beaver Valley

After much deliberation, Beaver Valley Branch has disbanded. We simply did not have the executive required to be viable. A few ladies kept our branch together for several years by assuming multiple roles. Our group was very small and experienced the effects of aging and health challenges. Our members have been encouraged to transfer their memberships to branches that are near them. We are proud of the many charitable donations that we have made to our community. For 15 years we offered a not-for-profit art camp that enriched the lives of many children. We shared many social times together. Our catered Christmas lunch and September picnic were always highlights. Beaver Valley Branch helped to plan two conventions in 2008 and 2018, working with area branches and enjoying sharing our talent and enthusiasm to make each convention memorable. The sharing and caring with the RWTO friends we have made will continue.

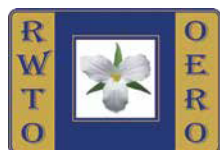
Ainsley Lewin, Branch President

RWTO/OERO Board of Directors 2021-2022

Past President	Nancy	Papiez
President	Nancy	Bell
First Vice-President	Judy	Drummond
Second Vice-President	Sandra	Salerno
Recording Secretary	Sandie	Bender
Program Coordinator	Judith	Bennoch
Sales Material Convenor	Judy	Anderson
Insurance Convenor	Karin	Mussen
Assist. Ins. Convenor	LeAnne	Taylor
Honorary President	Sharron	Colter
Resolutions/Constitution	Judy	Drummond
Goodwill	Sandra	Salerno
Nominations	Nancy	Papiez
Exec.Sec./Treasurer	Linda	Huffman
Parliamentarian	Jane	Cartier
Issues & Concerns	Kathy	Smith
Archivist	Susan	Rose
Convention Convenor	Cathy	Harrison
Membership Convenor	Evelyn	Martin
Comm. Newsletter Convenor	Jan	Murdoch
Comm. Website Convenor	Kathy	Gallagher
Director - Area 01	Connie	Morris
Director - Area 02	Jennifer	Bradbury
Director - Area 03	Lynn	Sulman
Director - Area 04	Evelyn	Martin
Director - Area 05	Judy	Anderson
Director - Area 06	Susan	Rose
Director - Area 07	Judy-Anne	Tumber
Director - Area 08	Joan	Gamble
Director - Area 09	Kathy	McLean
Director - Area 10	Suzanne	Rondeau
Director - Area 11	Jean Emily	Noble
Director - Area 12	Margaret	Geare
Director - Area 13	Kathy	Smith

RWTO/OERO Calendar 2021-2022

Sept. 1, 2021	Annual Provincial Membership Fees due - to be sent to the Provincial Office by Oct. 15th. Fees for new members must be forwarded to the Provincial Office when received.
Sept. 13-16, 2021	Executive Meeting. Area Directors Meeting. All Board Meeting.
Oct. 15, 2021	Membership fees due to provincial office.
Oct. 31, 2021	Submissions due for December Newsletter Areas: 5, 6, 8, 10, 11.
Nov. 15, 2021	Resolutions due for 2022 Annual General Meeting. Submit to Judy Drummond. Resignation of any Directors to Provincial President.
Nov. 30, 2021	Calculations of branch numbers for 2022 AGM delegates based on official membership count as received and recorded in the Provincial Office.
Jan. 5-10, 2022	Annual Report and Branch Membership Forms sent to branches.
Jan. 15, 2022	Submission of each new Area Director's name to the Provincial President.
Jan. 31, 2022	Nominations for 2022-2023 Board to the Provincial Past President. Membership and Communications Committee applications to the Provincial Past President. Nominations for Honorary Membership Award presented at 2022 AGM. Submissions for March Newsletter Areas: 2, 3, 9, 12.
Mar. 1, 2022	Submissions for Feather-in-Your-Hat-Award
Mar. 15, 2022	Branch Annual Reports due to Directors.
Mar. 31, 2022	Director reports due to the Program Coordinator. Unpaid members are taken off the list. Insurance may be in jeopardy. Financial Year End.
Apr. 15, 2022	All delegates names are to be in to the Executive Secretary-Treasurer. All registrations are due for Convention 2022.
Apr. 30, 2022	Branch Financial Reports are due to the Executive Secretary-Treasurer.
May 9-12, 2022	Provincial Executive and Board Meetings.
May 15, 2022	Branch Executive names for 2022-2023 due to the Executive Secretary-Treasurer.
June 7-9, 2022	Convention 2022 and AGM.



RWTO/OERO

RWTO/OERO Provincial Office
2736 Twelfth Conc,
Tecumseh, ON, N8N 0H9

**PM Agreement
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