



**RETIRED WOMEN TEACHERS OF ONTARIO/
ORGANISATION DES ENSEIGNANTES
RETRAITÉES DE L'ONTARIO**



**CRUISING DOWN
THE WATERS**
SAILING INTO KINGSTON
2023

67th ANNUAL CONVENTION

June 6, 7, and 8, 2023

FINAL REPORT

**Kingston Market Square Hotel, Marriott,
Kingston, Ontario**

RWTO-OERO Convention 2023

FINAL REPORT

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RWTO-OERO Convention 2023

CONVENOR'S REPORT

Submitted by Margaret Dempsey, Ottawa-Carleton

The 67th RWTO/OERO Convention took place from June 6-8, 2023 at the Kingston Market Square, Hotel, Kingston. This Convention was hosted by Areas 8 & 9. (Upper Canada East, Brockville, Gananoque, Kingston, Napanee, Lanark, Ottawa-Carleton)

Planning for this Convention initially began in 2018 under the leadership of Judy Drummond and Anne Graham, Co-Convenors from Lanark. In March 2020, due to the Covid pandemic, this in-person Convention was cancelled. Many aspects of a Convention were held online in June 2020, and June 2021. "Call to Convention, 2023" took place twice, most recently at the in-person Convention in London, 2022.

All 7 Branches were eager and willing to resume preparations for the 2023 Convention. They took pride in welcoming everyone to Kingston and to the Four Points Hotel. It is worthwhile noting that the Ambassador Hotel, closed during the pandemic and an alternative Hotel needed to be found. Hence the new contract with the Four Points Hotel, which became the Kingston Market Square Hotel during the winter of 2023.

The theme of ***"Cruising down the waters...sailing into Kingston"*** remained as did the logo, which had been designed for the 2020 Convention. Margaret Dempsey joined the planning team as Co-Convenor with Anne Graham. During 2022-2023, Judy Drummond became provincial President of RWTO/OERO. Judy retained her involvement with the planning team with particular foci being negotiating contracts both with the Hotel and the Kingston 1000 Islands Cruise Company. Marg. assumed responsibility for the Over 90's, Mother/Daughter, Aunt/Niece Luncheon and reporting to the Board of Directors as Convention Convenor. Anne retained her responsibility for the entertainment on the Cruise and at the Hotel.

Karen Kerr-Kennedy, Brockville Branch, assumed the role of Registrar. Barb Edwards and Martha Summers, Ottawa-Carleton Branch, resumed their previous roles of Treasurer and Communications/Printing respectfully. Each Branch was represented on the Planning Committee with around 23 members working on behalf of the Convention.

The initial budget for the 2023 Convention was based on money remaining from the cancelled 2020 Convention and a total of \$8,000 Provincial Grant and two \$5,000 loans also from Provincial. In addition, \$1,800 was received from Manulife, \$1,000 from ETFO and \$500 from OECA.

The Planning Team met in person in Brockville on October 6, 2022, and at the Hotel on April 18, 2023. ZOOM meetings were held on November 16, 2022, January 10, 2023, and March 8, 2023. A Convention debrief meeting was held on August 9, 2023, at Judy Drummond's home.

Communication was further enhanced by telephone calls and emails. Please note that Areas 8 & 9 cover a wide geographic area; members are to be commended for traveling a considerable distance at their own expense to attend in-person meetings.

Members of the Provincial Board are important members of the Convention team. Kathy Gallagher, Website Convenor, and Judith Bennoch, Program Convenor, are to be commended for their hard work and advice to the planning team. Susan Rice and Suzanne Rondeau are to be recognized for their moving and sensitive In Memoriam service. Kathy McLean, Area 9 Director, and Membership Chair conducted the Awards at the President's Banquet. Special thanks to Judy Drummond, Provincial President, for all her work and advocacy on

behalf of this Convention. The planning team wanted to show the province how proud we are of Judy by showcasing warm hospitality from Eastern Ontario and a well-organized Convention.

Baldwin Audio/ Visual Solutions, Kingston was retained as the provider for technology throughout the Convention. We extend our thanks and appreciation to the support from The Kingston Market Square Hotel, Kingston Tourism, the Marine Museum of the Great Lakes, the Kingston 1000 Islands Cruise Company, and to Baldwin for their professionalism, support and good humour throughout the planning process and the Convention itself. All businesses we called upon were eager to assist us.

The Convention was well received by the delegates, members and visitors who attended. 157 Evaluations were submitted. Having read all of them, I am impressed with the time delegates took to provide us with constructive comments on what to do again and how to improve upon their experience in future. Erin Linnen, Ottawa-Carleton, volunteered to read all evaluations and to prepare a written summary which was presented at the August 9th Planning Committee Debrief Meeting. A list of her generic recommendations, based upon feedback, is included in this Report.

Unfortunately smoke from forest fires in Ontario and Quebec blanketed Kingston and area on June 6 and 7. The smell of smoke was evident both in the Hotel and outside.

It was an honour to serve as Provincial Convenor for this 67th Convention. It is a big job, well worth the time and effort. One of the greatest benefits from planning this Convention is that the members of Areas 8 and 9 got to know one another and to laugh and problem-solve as a “team.” Everyone pitched in as needed and I believe that a ‘close’ bond was created, even though we all reside throughout Eastern Ontario. Isn’t it wonderful to have RWTO/OERO friends and colleagues in 7 different Branches!

Recommendations:

1. The Convention Handbook is an essential resource that should be updated and continued.
2. Seeking out volunteers for the various roles at a Convention, among many Branches, is a big task. Thanks to the women who volunteered to drive to Kingston and to those who sought them out. Having designates from the areas involved to seek out volunteers may be helpful in the future.
3. Accommodations and activities reflect the age and stage in life of our members. Hopefully hotels will be able to provide suitable rooms/amenities and equipment for meetings, eg. ramps, handrails on steps, washroom equipment; (had been advocating for such resources when planning for this Convention.)

RWTO-OERO Convention 2023

REGISTRAR'S REPORT

Submitted by Karen Kerr-Kennedy, Brockville

RWTO-OERO Convention Registrants as of June 5th, 2023:

There were 207 registrations including:

Full package – 198
Exceptions – 9
6 cruise only – 4 members, 2 guests
1 cruise, all day Wednesday and School Museum tour
4 Wednesday banquet only – 2 members and 2 guests
1 Thursday lunch
1 all day Thursday

Cruise total: 205
Wednesday breakfast: 199
Wednesday dinner banquet: 203
Thursday regular breakfast: $198 + 1 = 199 - 25$ (BOD breakfast) = 174
Thursday lunch: $200 + 35 = 235$

Workshops: (Please note that some attendees switched workshops)

Treasurers: 32
Insurance: 23
Helping our Branches Thrive, Part 2- $44 + 22 = 66$ in total
Zumba Gold: 30
Long Term Care: 30

Tours:

Kingston Penitentiary: 24
Amherst Island: 43
Frontenac County Schools Museum: 17
Staycation: Sherry Pringle, author, "Extraordinary Women, Extraordinary Times"- 19

- *Nine (9) people had to withdraw for medical/emergency reasons between March and June 5th.*
- *Judy Drummond was the first registrant via mail!*
- *There were almost equal numbers applying online and by regular mail. Most members who registered online paid by e-transfer, but some followed up with a cheque.*
- *The Excel program was handy for finding addresses and creating a spreadsheet. I also used it to generate the receipts and to forward the information to our publication and printing co-ordinator, Martha Summers.*
- *Name tags were made using the program that came with the blank card stock labels.*
- *The Gmail account was very useful in keeping track of communications with members regarding payments received, workshop choices, and sharing of information.*
- *There was effective email correspondence between the President- Judy Drummond, Chairpersons- Marg Dempsey and Anne Graham, the various planning committees, Judith Bennoch, the Executive Treasurer and especially with the treasurer- Barb Edwards.*
- *This required a big commitment which I found rewarding and educational. Teachers really are life-long learners and I appreciate the guidance and encouragement along the way.*

RWTO-OERO Convention 2023

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Submitted by Barbara Edwards, Ottawa-Carleton

ITEM	TO DATE	BUDGET
REVENUE		
Registration Package (197 x \$300 = \$59,100) + (10 x \$325 = \$3,250.00)	\$62,350.00	\$60,000.00
Registration Daily	\$845.00	\$1,000.00
Tours	\$7,160.60	\$7,000.00
Provincial Grant	\$8,000.00	\$8,000.00
Manulife donation	\$1,800.00	\$1,800.00
Federation donations (ETFO: \$1,000; OECTA: \$500)	\$1,500.00	\$1,000.00
Provincial 1st advance	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
Provincial 2nd advance	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
Silent auction	\$2,955.00	\$3,000.00
Cruise tickets (12 x \$60)	\$720.00	
Provincial reimbursement	\$15,052.39	\$11,500.00
Ambassador Hotel cancelled – deposit returned	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
Other: (closing 2020 bank account - \$1,839.99); refunded cheque costs - \$189.81);	\$2,029.80	\$2,029.80
Other #2: (sale of lanterns - \$240); (float for Silent Auction - \$250)	\$490.00	
TOTAL REVENUE	\$113,902.79	\$106,329.80
EXPENDITURES		
Registrants withdrew (9 x \$300 = \$2,700) + (2 x \$275 = \$550)	\$3,250.00	
Tours registrants cancelled	\$290.00	
Registrants who paid too much/compensation	\$1,595.00	
Provincial 1st advance	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
Provincial 2nd advance	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
Four Points Kingston Hotel (deposit)	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00

Four Point Kingston Hotel - rental space	\$0.00	\$1,500.00
Four Points Kingston Hotel - Meals	\$46,042.36	\$50,000.00
Coffee Breaks - (\$840.04) + (947.38)	\$1,787.42	\$3,000.00
Hospitality room	\$657.14	\$2,000.00
Tours Wednesday (Pen tour - \$1,028); (buses - \$502.85); (Staycation - \$150); (Friends of the Penitentiary Museum - \$125); (Frontenac County Schools Museum - \$85); Elena's Café - \$1,365.40); (water - \$6.81); (lunches before Pen tour - \$677.93)	\$3,940.99	\$5,000.00
Boat Cruise Tuesday (cruise and food)	\$8,111.69	\$7,000.00
Workshops (Zeal Fitness - \$150)	\$150.00	
Printing – Provincial (\$36.36 + \$1,497.49 + \$296.29)	\$1,830.14	\$2,000.00
Printing – Convention (\$115.28 + \$326.96 + \$92.24 + \$198.72 + \$46.94 + 41.80 + \$405.11)	\$1,227.05	\$2,000.00
Flowers - Provincial	\$348.54	\$500.00
Entertainment- (The Reasons -\$1,000) + (Steve and Penny Lloyd - \$250)	\$1,250.00	\$1,250.00
Technical support (Provincial)	\$8,811.30	\$8,000.00
Tote bags – (baggies \$31.62; bars \$127.02) (ribbons, bars, etc. - \$36.81)	\$195.45	\$300.00
Table Centrepieces	\$61.60	\$750.00
Table Favours (\$472.39 + \$142.64 + \$475.52)	\$1,090.55	\$1,500.00
Photographer	\$0.00	\$250.00
Call to Convention (printing \$231.65)	\$231.65	\$231.65
Board lunch Tuesday (Provincial)	\$1,237.40	\$1,000.00
Thursday Lunch (Over 90's; Mother/Daughter/Aunt/Niece)	\$740.46	\$750.00
Volunteer appreciation (sandwiches - \$317.35 + \$242.68); (water - \$3.99)	\$564.02	\$1,500.00
Honoraria (Town Crier -\$150.00); (Piper - \$100.00); (photo booth - \$100); (Long Term Care Speakers - \$50); (2Cadets - \$75)	\$475.00	\$350.00
Office supplies (name tag holders - \$325.37); (photocopying \$100); (poster board - \$24.85); (Marg D - \$91.15); (toner - \$101.90); (paper - \$11.29); (balloons - \$42.38); (Registrar - \$98.48); (silent auction - \$27.42); (4 boxes of masks - \$24); (office/registration - \$174.92); (photocopying, memory sticks - \$61.90)	\$1,083.66	\$1,000.00

Banking (service charges - \$33.00 + \$108.50 + \$45.75 + \$37 + \$15.46 + \$5 + \$81 + \$6.75 + \$3); (cheques & case, deposit book, stamp -\$189.81); (Silent Auction float - \$250); (envelopes/stamps - \$24.80)	\$800.07	\$750.00
Convention meeting expenses (Oct 6/22 - \$426) + (April 18/23 - \$440.04)	\$866.04	\$1,500.00
Other Expenses (returned cheque -\$375); (Over 90's lunch compensation - \$120)	\$495.00	\$1,000.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	\$98,132.53	\$104,131.65
BALANCE (Sept 6, 2023) \$113,902.79 - \$98,132.53 =	\$15,770.26	

Proposed Budget balance: \$106,329.80 - \$104,131.65 = \$2,198.15

75% to hosting branches \$11,827.69

25% to Provincial \$3,942.57

COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

Submitted by Martha Summers, Ottawa-Carleton

Because much of the printing and publishing work had been started back in 2018 when planning began for the cancelled 2020 convention, and the theme remained the same, we had a good start. The printer, Sure Print & Graphics, had been selected and quotes received. These were a bit higher this time, but still reasonable. The staff were very helpful, and we worked well together.

This year's work began in early 2022. The "Cruising Down the Waters" logo had been created previously, and just required a bit of editing. It was possible to use many of the files which had already been prepared by updating and editing them. These included:

- The Call to Convention materials including a brochure and bookmark which gave preliminary information about the 2023 convention and were distributed at the 2022 event.
- An ad for the fall and winter *Connections* newsletter.
- A letterhead for use by the committee when communicating with various people.
- Greeting cards with the logo to be used as invitations or thank you cards.
- Registration forms and convention details for *Connections*.
- Logo stickers in several sizes for use by various committees.
- Voting cards.
- Signs for the Wednesday tour leaders.
- Silent auction poster, bidding sheets and master list.
- Welcome signs for the hotel lobby regarding the morning walking tours and Tuesday Boat Cruise, and for the Over 90s display table.
- Room location signs for workshops, hospitality suite, silent auction.
- Design of the evaluation forms.
- Table numbers with logo for meals.

As time progressed, registrations began to come in and the more detailed work began:

- Preparation of the daily schedules which could be printed on the registration envelopes, along with other important details and a map of the convention venue.
- Preparation of the cover for the annual report.
- Providing the spreadsheet to the printer for creating the name labels for voting cards and registration envelopes - names kept changing to the very end!
- Creating the certificates for the over 90 and mother/daughter guests at the Thursday luncheon (purchased border sheets and printed them).
- Preparation of volunteer name tags.
- Organizing provincial files and sending them on to printer as they became available.
- Table programs for Wednesday banquet and Thursday luncheon.

One goal had been to keep costs down as much as possible. Several things helped with this:

- Some things which required labels (logo and RWTO/OERO stickers) were printed in black and white and then had the coloured labels attached (e.g., voting cards, bidding sheets, envelopes etc.).

- Files which required many copies or enlargement (e.g., posters, or documents which needed collating and stapling) were sent print ready to the printer, eliminating the need to have them do more work (posters and some signs needed to be enlarged).
- Items which did not require multiple copies were printed at home (claim submitted for special paper and ink).

A very important part of this job was keeping in close contact with the planning committee - co-chairs, registrar, provincial president, sub- committee members, and the provincial website convenor, to whom all files were submitted that she needed for the web site.

RWTO-OERO Convention 2023

REGISTRATION REPORT

Including delegate/guest bags & table meal seating

Submitted by Kathy McLean, Ottawa-Carleton

Registration:

The registration table at the convention in June 2023 was the result of a combined effort of five volunteers. Committee members Sharon Chop, Barbara Edwards, Margaret Dempsey, Kathy Mclean, and volunteer Irene Cameron met and assembled the blue convention bags approximately two months prior to the convention.

These bags contained a map of Kingston, a map of the Shopping district of Kingston, postcards, dish clothes, emery boards, bookmarks, fridge magnets, breakfast bars (peanut free), pens, and notepads.

These bags were well received. Approximately 30 extra empty blue bags were given to Branches to take back to their membership.

White Envelopes:

These were put together by the same committee. 250 white envelopes were filled with the AGM documents. Each envelope was labelled.

Table Seating Plan:

The seating arrangement for both meals took into consideration mobility issues, such as wheelchairs, canes, and walkers. These persons were placed at tables on the outside, making access easier. Every attempt was made to keep the branches together in groups of at least six (where possible).

Past presidents were seated together at Wednesday's dinner and then joined their branches for the Thursday luncheon.

The seating arrangement on Thursday luncheon (over 90s) necessitated a change for some tables as four tables in the middle were designated for our over 90s members and guests. The tables for Thursday luncheon were placed farther apart so that the Over 90s were able to easily access their table.

Recommendations:

1. Cross-reference the registrar's list with the official list from Judith Bennoch (program coordinator).
2. Establish a slightly earlier cutoff date would make this huge task a lot easier.
3. Where possible consider moving the seating arrangement for each meal so that each group could be seated in different areas at each meal (This would increase significantly the already large amount of work involved in preparing for each meal.)
4. Due to the amount of work required in each of the three above areas, each area should be the responsibility of one individual committee.

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HOSPITALITY REPORT

Submitted by Diana McKendry, Upper Canada East

This room was very much appreciated and much needed at the Convention. It was used whenever opened and was a great gathering place to come relax, have a snack, and catch up with friends and colleagues.

Tues. June 6th – food out by noon. It was a good thing we had Chartwell's donations of food as many delegates came to have lunch since there was no lunch offered with registration. The hospitality room was full during the lunch hour and the delegates couldn't say enough about how they appreciated it being open with a wonderful variety of food, including cold meats and squares etc. Great for lunch.

If the extra food had not been donated, we would have run out of food and had to purchase more for Wednesday.

Volunteers:

Volunteers were plentiful. We had four for each block of two hours. Ladies thought that was too many.

Volunteers on the Wed. June 7th needed instructions on what to do and what was expected but we had all gone on tours. So, there was no overlap from Tues to Wed.

Cost:

To keep the cost down, some of our branch Executive brought flowers from their gardens and created the arrangements on site. We had many compliments regarding the arrangements, and some wondered where in Kingston they might obtain similar ones.

Because we had a great shopper who went to Costco for us and purchased the necessary foods eg: a variety of crackers, cheeses, cookies and ordered platters of fruits and veggies from the local grocery store, we feel the cost was minimal in comparison to ordering food through the hotel. Delegates also appreciated having gluten free food available as well.

Cost for food was \$563. The plates and napkins were ordered through Amazon where quantities for a good price were available. \$ 98. Our budget was \$2000. So, I feel we did extremely well to only use approximately \$661. But the Co-Convenor on receiving the final bills from the hotel got a shock when the hotel charged \$840. on Tues. and \$947.38 for Wednesday's tea, coffee, and juice. There was an extra 4.5% taxable gratuity plus HST charged as well. The treasurer added these costs to the food from the hotel, so the Hospitality Room looks like they were way under budget when in fact, the budget was blown!!

Recommendations:

1. Perhaps at Convention groups like Chartwell could be approached to ask for donations, whether it be monetary or concrete ones to keep the cost down.
2. One volunteer should attend the beginning of the second day to help guide the volunteers with their roles. Once they feel comfortable, this volunteer could leave.
3. In future it is suggested to buy independent of the hotel, when possible, even for the beverages.

RWTO-OERO Convention 2023

SILENT AUCTION REPORT

Submitted by Brenda Johnston and Mary Dexter-Kayser, Lanark

The Silent Auction was very successful. Delegates and guests attending the convention were impressed by the items donated by the branches from across the province. The room was large which allowed efficient display of the auction items. The Convention Committee members, volunteers and Market Square Marriott staff helped make this a success.

The room was set up by the hotel staff and was ready when we arrived. We were provided with 3 key cards giving access when we required it. The room was securely locked when not in use. The room had 2 exit/entry doors. The room was large enough that we only used 1 door until time of processing “winners”. Cheques were processed at one door and cash at the other door. We had 4 volunteers retrieving items. No entry to room was allowed once bidding stopped at 5:00pm on Wednesday. The room was located right next to registration desk which allowed items to be dropped off easily.

We labelled and numbered all items and set them up for display. All items were recorded on master recording sheet. We were able to open the auction room to members for browsing and bidding well before the scheduled time. Bidding sheets clearly stated that bids were to be in increments of \$5. Although not everyone read that, we were able to catch the issue early and give reminders. The viewing was busy before and after meetings, meals, and entertainment. During Wednesday afternoon, volunteers wrote and addressed a thank you note to each branch that contributed auction items. These were delivered Thursday morning before the meetings. The auction was closed promptly at 5:00 on Wednesday. The preparation and displaying of the winner list took lots of time. Our committee did it and were able to be seated in the dining room at the specified time.

The majority of gifts were picked up Wednesday night as the room was not available to us the next day. Thanks to Barb and Martha for helping with cash and cheque collection. Barb secured, counted, and recorded the money. The three gifts left were secured in the “convention office” and claimed the next morning.

The Convention team was very supportive, helpful, and encouraging to the silent auction team from the start. Thanks to Judy Drummond for sending a reminder to the branches about contributing auction items with a \$50 value.

The final profit for the Silent Auction was \$2955.

Recommendations:

1. Before the auction, the auction team on a regular basis, should review the times the delegates will be free to attend the auction. This will help with determining how many volunteers will be required.
2. Create a formal list of the volunteers’ time commitment.
3. Prepare a formal list of volunteers with contact information and volunteer times.

4. Define final volunteer shifts and duties at least 3 to 4 weeks before the convention. Keep a copy at the silent auction desk.
5. Prepare 2 charts with the Silent Auction "open". Post outside the room and inside the room.
6. An auction helper MUST fill in the Bidding sheet. Require 2 volunteers at the desk at the busy times. Also fill in a master sheet of Branch and item donated. Make copies so you will have for distributing "winners". You need 1 or 2 volunteers to place items on the tables.
7. It is helpful to place items in numerical order in which they are received.
8. As soon as possible start to fill in the Winners' sheet that will be posted. We used the number of the item and the winners' name beside that.
9. At the payment table it was handy to have an extra table for the multiple gifts won by one person who could not carry all winning gifts at once and had to return to collect.
10. When accepting cheques as payment, have someone who knows about recording cheque numbers and identification names and checking payment information, as well as items received.
11. At the table and outside the room display a large print card with fill-out-the-cheque information. Have a large enough table for one person to be filling out cheque while another is actually submitting the cheque or have a small table outside room door.
12. A large room with many display tables is needed.

Silent Auction Statistics:	Totals
• Participating areas	13
• Volunteer helpers	6
• Bidding sheets	76
• Winners	A whole bunch!
• Prizes donated	76
• Participating branches	47
• Thank You cards to donor branches	47
• "Final Winner" door charts	3 chart paper pages
• Total cash float to start	\$250
• Total money received	\$2955

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TABLE FAVOURS REPORT

Submitted by Laraine Clancy, Kingston and Eleanor Porteous, Napanee

At a bee hosted by Betty Jeanne Kippen, and attended by Joan Gamble, Diana McKendry, Sandi Decker, Mary Ellen Garlough, Laraine Clancy, and Eleanor Porteous, we made 272 decorative bracelets for the Thursday luncheon. We also assembled an assortment of individually wrapped chocolates in 261 muffin cups for the Wednesday banquet. It was quite a team effort, and the favours were well received at the Convention meals.

CENTERPIECES REPORT

Submitted by Nancy Sled and Joan Gamble, Gananoque

In 2018, 32 Lanterns at \$8.00 each were purchased totalling \$256.00. Material and ribbon amounting to \$160.00 were also bought. The total amount of \$460.00 was paid and reimbursed.

In 2023, battery operated candles to place inside the lanterns were purchased for \$66.00 and this amount was also reimbursed. The total cost of centrepieces was \$482.00.

On the last day of the Convention, 24 lanterns were sold for \$10.00 each. The total sale amounted to \$240.00 and will help reduce the cost of the Convention centerpieces.

ENTERTAINMENT REPORT

Submitted by Anne Graham, Lanark

Tuesday, June 6:

The three Amigos, Steve and Penny Lloyd and Dieter Boehme, entertained on the main deck of the Island Queen as we toured Kingston Harbour. They were greatly enjoyed and even with limited space, some dancers were able to move and groove. Cost: \$250.

Wednesday, June 7:

After the Wednesday night banquet, we were entertained by the Reasons, a 50's to 80's rock and roll group based out of Prince Edward County. The group of entertainers led by Peter Rae, vocals, and lead guitar, also features John Sharkey with his amazing vocal skills and continuous bass groove, the rocking drumming of Mike Bond and dazzling keyboard of Steve Wilson. The band was booked through Rick Smith at Metcalfe Music Entertainment. They played the music we enjoy and had the dance floor up and jumping! What an enjoyable way to end the evening after our special banquet!
Cost \$1000.

RWTO-OERO Convention 2023

PAST PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Submitted by Anne Graham, Lanark

On Monday June 5th, President Judy Drummond entertained the eight Provincial Past Presidents attending the convention in her suite before we gathered in the hotel restaurant for dinner where we were joined by Judy, Sandra Salerno and Jan Murdock. Enjoying being together were Jean Axcell, Karen Clark Lauzon, Anne Graham, Lois Lockhart, Nancy Papiez, Annette Rhodes, Dianne Rice and Peggy Stock. Judy also arranged that three others, Nancy Bell, Sharon Colter and Carol Martin were able to with us on Zoom.

We also enjoyed being seated together at the Awards Banquet on Wednesday.

RWTO-OERO Convention 2023

TOURS COMMITTEE REPORT

Submitted by Teresa Dorey, Napanee

1. Prior to our first planning Committee meeting I (Tour Convenor) reviewed plans from our cancelled 2020 Conference. Three of those four tours were still viable – Amherst Island, Frontenac County Schools Museum and the Kingston Penitentiary and Museum. The fourth was no longer available so a new Staycation needed to be found.
2. A committee was formed to prepare the tours consisting of myself, a co-convenor, the hostess of the Amherst Island Tour, the hostess of the Frontenac County Schools Museum and another branch member.
3. Each hostess was asked to get someone to be a backup for them in case of illness, etc.
4. Buses (2) were booked in November, one for the Amherst Island tour and one to accommodate both the Penitentiary and the Schools Museum tours.
5. A Staycation was decided on and booked in late fall.
6. A caterer was booked early in the year to provide boxed lunches to the Amherst Island and Schools Museum participants. Complimentary lunches were provided to the bus drivers and hostesses. Numbers and dietary restrictions were communicated to the caterer two weeks in advance. The caterer was extremely accommodating even phoning one participant with extensive dietary restrictions. Lunches for the penitentiary tour were provided by the hotel with good reviews from participants. The Staycation lunch was on your own prior to the presentation.
7. Lists of participants were provided to each hostess along with phone numbers of venues and myself in case of emergencies.
8. The penitentiary tour was paid for by myself at the time of booking and reimbursed.

Recommendations:

1. Check with venues two weeks prior to be sure everything is in place as expected. We had two unexpected cancellations. One was resolved after much negotiation. The other, thanks to the hostess' quick thinking was able to substitute a similar venue experience.
2. If venues are nearby saving money by staggering bus departure times so one bus can do two routes.
3. Establish with the hotel where the bus pickups and drop offs may occur.
4. Emphasize over and over that the buses will depart at the designated times with or without you to meet deadlines for ferries and/or venues.
5. Have a good sound system for bus tours.
6. Send an accompanying brochure to give further details about the tours. Items that might be included: more details about the venue, kind of bus (coach or school bus), washroom availability, accessibility issues, amount of walking required, shoes for uneven ground, appropriate dress, etc.

RWTO-OERO Convention 2023

SPECIAL RECOGNITION: OVER 90'S, MOTHER-DAUGHTER, AUNT-NIECE

Submitted by Margaret Dempsey, Ottawa-Carleton, and Betty Lee-Daigle, Gananoque

Activities/Actions:

January: Create letter of invitation, form for mobility/dietary restrictions, companions etc.

February: Send information about the Thursday Luncheon to branch presidents through Judith Bennoch. Request that branch presidents ask eligible members if they are interested in attending the Luncheon on Thursday, June 8, 2023. Members who are interested in attending will be mailed/emailed invitation and form for completion...to be returned to the convenor by May 1st.

Each interested member was asked to submit a brief bio of her teaching experience and a photo of at least 800 pixels. Kathy Gallagher prepared a lovely video presentation of the names and photos of each member attending the Luncheon. In addition, the names and Branch of each member over age 90 was listed on this video presentation. This presentation played as the members entered the ballroom, led by Chris Whyman, Kingston Town Crier.

May: Karen Thomas volunteered to create an 8 ½ X 11 handout of each photo and bio submitted. These were printed on poster board, displayed during the Convention, and given to the members to take home as a remembrance of being honoured at this Luncheon.

May: Confirmed attendance of members/companions at the Luncheon, via email, mail and/or telephone.

- Certificates were made for each member by Martha Summers, Communications/Printing.
- Confirmed names and numbers with Karen Kennedy, Registrar.
- Worked with Kathy McLean for seating plan for reserved 4 tables at the Luncheon.
- Arranged for flowers/name tags/table place cards/labelled envelopes for certificates and bios on foam boards.
- Confirmed space for greeting the Over 90's and their companions.

Final Numbers:

- 20 guests over 90's years of age; a Mother/Daughter duo; = 38 including companions.
- Regrettably 2 members over the age of 90 were not able to attend.

Acknowledgements:

"Thank you so much for the lovely gathering you organized for the 90's and over, the Mothers/Daughters and the great gathering of all the RWTO/OERO members."

“Thank you! What a lot of work putting on the special event for the retired lady teachers, 90 years and over. Everything went so smoothly and hopefully all got home safely. The food was delicious, and the kitchen staff were amazing. It must have taken hours in preparation and clean-up after. My lovely rose sits on the table where I can enjoy it, my homemade bracelet looks nice on my arm and my new coffee mug and contents will be put to good use. Thank you for everything. My daughter, Kathy, who was with me was very impressed and adds her thanks as well. All the best in future events. Thanks to all who helped with this event – I’m so proud.” Fran Pringle

Considerations and Recommendations:

1. This special Luncheon should continue at future in-person Conventions. Feedback received from members and companions was very positive.
2. Start the planning early and plan for the unexpected.

RWTO-OERO Convention 2023

DOOR PRIZES

Submitted by Sharon Chop, Ottawa-Carleton

Door Prize Bags:

The seven branches from areas 8 and 9 each provided 10 door prizes packaged in gift bags and brought them to the Kingston Convention.

Method of drawing for and distributing of prizes:

Random numbers were generated, and 2 posters were made for the two nights – after the Tuesday boat cruise and after the Wednesday night banquet. Members were asked to check to see if their registration number was present on the poster and were requested to pick up their prizes from the registration table. As prizes were picked up numbers were crossed out on the master list.

Comments:

- This is a similar method that has been used previously.
- Prizes were thoughtful and nicely packaged.
- Many convention attendees did not come to pick up prizes after the boat cruise.
- Although many of the attendees were previous Convention participants, they needed to be made aware that their registration number on their name card was the number to check for a prize.

Recommendations:

1. A poster near the winning number poster outlining the procedure might help.
2. Reminders from the lectern may help.

RWTO-OERO Convention 2023

67TH CONVENTION EVALUATIONS: SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Compiled By Erin Linnen, Ottawa-Carleton

Erin Linnen, Ottawa-Carleton, read the 157 Evaluations that were submitted at the end of the 67th Convention. Erin presented a summary Report to the Committee on August 9, 2023. Below are recommendations that she gleaned from the members' feedback for the future.

1. Have limited number of tickets for popular activity e.g., Tuesday night cruise. Plan for worst case scenario i.e., choose activities that are not weather-dependent or plan to accommodate for in-climate weather conditions. Make sure that accessibility is provided for every activity.
2. Time tours to take place when business meetings are finished. Ensure that timing/scheduling ensure that debate over resolutions is not impacted by groups having to get up and leave to join a tour.
3. E-transfer payments appreciated. On-line registration is very helpful.
4. Have greeters at hotel front desk to welcome and direct to convention registration area including on Monday night for early arrivals.
5. Have maximum 8 people at meeting and dining tables for comfort, business productivity, accessibility, and good health.
6. Ensure sound systems in meeting rooms and on buses and modes of transportation e.g., on ship and buses, adequate working space and areas for movement appropriate for the age and physical challenges of the participants.
7. Ensure that all beds are at least doubles i.e., no pull-out beds or couches.
8. Consider streamlining awards procedure by calling up a) a whole tier b) all winners for a category c) hold applause until everyone gets there.
9. Provide a variety of gluten-free desserts, not just oranges every meal every day. Diabetics require a snack between meals that is not just a starchy carb. Have a choice of protein e.g., beef or fish, or chicken.
10. Keep accessibility needs of this age group in mind i.e., no stairs to climb, raised toilet seats, non-skid bathtub strips, coach buses not school buses, and high-quality sound system in each area. Walk-in showers are preferred. Warn participants of activities that involve a challenge of walking on uneven surfaces or stair climbing ahead of time, prolonged walking. Plenty of grab bars are needed in showers and bathtubs.
11. Ensure lots of accessible washrooms on same floor near eating and meeting areas.

12. Ensure lots of signage for and to meeting rooms, hospitality room and washrooms.
13. Meeting, workshop rooms and eating areas are preferred all on one floor and level.
14. At reception, point out meaning of volunteers wearing a particular scarf, where the washrooms are, where the hospitality room is etc.
15. List length of tours in the registration booklet as well as any accessibility challenges.
16. Have volunteer helpers easily identified from afar e.g., wearing a certain colour of scarf.
17. Consider organizing an “early bird” activity for those who must arrive the night/day before the start of Convention due to travel scheduling.