



RWTO/OERO

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



St Catharines Branch Newsletter, October 2023

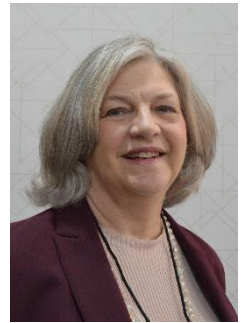
President's Message Melanie Kelch, President 2023-2024

As I sit here writing this newsletter message, we have revisited summer temperatures and sunshine. However, as we approach the Fall Season, we have geared up our RWTO activities for 2023-2024. We had our first luncheon of the season at St. John's Activity Centre on September 27th. A lovely meal of chicken, perogies, salad and veggies, followed by chocolate cake was enjoyed by all. Kudos to Louise Farquhar, our Social Convenor, for arranging such a wonderful day. We were so pleased to host our "Forever Young" Members. Thanks to Janis Harlos and her helpers for organizing these ladies who were able to attend. We also hosted Dr. Deanna White and Debbie Mantini from Wellspring Niagara Cancer Support. We learned so much about the supports that are available in the Niagara Region for those who are affected by cancer in some way. Thank you to our Vice President Emily Lomas-Gale for organizing such a fulfilling presentation. We were also so fortunate to have Marg Newby, Issues and Concerns Convenor, outline the new protocols for contacting 911 in an emergency. Marg is one of our "Forever Young" members. She even shared a situation that she experienced just the evening before

this lunch. How fortunate we are to have such a dedicated member and for Marg's continuing interest in Issues and Concerns.

On top of all of that activity, Carol Morningstar, our Area 13 Director brought greetings from the Provincial Board, and we had presentations by Susan McLaughlin, Insurance; Linda Foster, Budget; and Kathleen Bradley, Interest Groups and Out 'n About. We welcomed two new members. Stay tuned for more information about upcoming activities. St. Catharines is a very active branch with something for everyone. We are now looking forward to our October luncheon.

As we progress through this RWTO year, your executive is working hard to keep you informed about issues and events. Please do not hesitate to reach out to any member of the executive if you have questions, thoughts, or concerns.



OCTOBER LUNCHEON

Wednesday, October 25, 2023. 11:00 am

Club Capri, 36 Cleveland St, Thorold

Guest Speaker: Michele-Elise Burnett, Indigenous Artist, Consultant, Educator, Activist

Strong Water Singers

\$33.00 Payment due by Oct 18

RWTO/OERO Outreach Project

Emergency supplies needed for Westview Centre4Women

Bring items to this luncheon and we will deliver them to the Centre.
Blankets, Sleeping Bags, Tarps, Candles, Flashlights, Batteries, Hand Warmers,
Women's and Children's Clothing or monetary donations





Wednesday, December 6, 2023

**CHRISTMAS BUFFET LUNCHEON
AT THE HOLIDAY INN**

327 Ontario Street, St. Catharines, ON

Piano & Christmas Sing-Along

Community Care Donation Presentation

(Note: A Community Care Donation Flyer will arrive in early November)

11:00 am Doors Open: 10:30 am

\$50.00 **Payment Due by November 29, 2023**



April Luncheon

Wednesday, April 24, 2024

11:00 am

Amici's Banquet and Conference Centre, 2740 Merrittville Hwy (just past Brock)

Guest Speaker: Detective Constable, Jeffrey May, Fraud Unit, NRP

Menu: Chicken parm and pasta, salad and dessert

\$36.00 **Payment due by April 17**

May AGM Luncheon

Wednesday, May 22, 2024

11:00 am

Four Points by Sheraton, 3530 Schmon Pkwy, Thorold, ON



General Luncheon Information

1. All meetings begin at 11:00 am. Doors open at 10:30 am, unless otherwise indicated.
2. The **name tags** are on the table close to the entrance and are displayed in alphabetical order.
3. The cost for the luncheon will depend on what the facility is charging.
4. **Payment for luncheons must be received by the Wednesday prior to each luncheon**, whether by cheque or e-transfer. If you are late in mailing your cheque, let Linda Foster know that you are planning to attend and that your cheque is in the mail.
5. There are **no luncheon tickets**. As your payment is received, your name is added to the list of attendees. You should receive a call or an email when the Treasurer has received your payment.
6. Cheques are payable to: RWTO St. Catharines and mailed to: Linda Foster, 14 Woodgarden Crt., St Catharines ON L2M 7C9. E-transfers, use the rwto@catharines@gmail.com address.
7. Luncheon payments will be returned if cancelled by the Wednesday prior to the luncheon. Call (905) 935-6182 Linda Foster to cancel.
8. You will receive a phone call or email reminder several weeks prior to the luncheon.
9. Escorts needed. Sometimes our members need a ride to the luncheon. If you require a ride, or could provide assistance, please call Janis Harlos at (905) 892-8203.

We are a Fragrance-Free Environment.

Luncheon Updates



We are so pleased to have Louise Farquhar as our Social Convenor. Louise has held this role for many years. She works extremely hard at finding appropriate venues for our luncheons/meetings. Since the pandemic, she has had ever increasing challenges when booking venues for these events. As we all know, prices of everything have increased substantially over the past few years. This is true of the venues that we choose for our luncheons. After meeting with the presidents of the other Area 13 branches, we learned that this is not unique to St. Catharines. Menu choices have been reduced, serving staff is harder to find at the venues, and of course, prices are up. Louise negotiates with the venues to keep the costs as low as possible. She works hard to be sure that the venues are accessible and to add variety to the menus chosen. Often the venues want to charge a room fee and also a fee for the use of the AV equipment. We want to thank Louise for her dedication to this position. Submitted by Melanie Kelch, President

Highlights from the September Luncheon

Join Us! You could be next!

Caring and Sharing Recognition:

Kathleen Bradley and Marg Pulford receiving recognition for service. Presented by Melanie Kelch, President and Linda Gaudet, Past President.



The winner of the 50/50 draw of \$200.00+ was Sandra Shynal.



Door Prize

Winner, Jane Mastrandrea
One of three door prizes given away.



Our six **Forever Young ladies** were presented a rose by Betty Axon, Honorary President. Thank you, Janis Harlos, Goodwill, for all the arrangements and making this happen.



New Members: Vicki Schindel and Helga Hochmeister were presented a rose by Melanie Kelch, President; Linda Foster and Clara Warden, Membership.



Caring and Sharing Awards Seeking Nominees



The Caring and Sharing Awards are handed out to recipients who have engaged in unusual projects, in commitment to time and service and/or in going above and beyond within Interest Groups. We are asking you to submit any worthy recipient's name to Linda Gaudet, Past President, or Betty Axon, Honorary President.



Betty Axon
Honorary President



Linda Gaudet
Past President

Goodwill Report by Janis Harlos, Goodwill Convenor

The leaves are changing to orange and red, a sure sign that we have left summer and can now look forward to spectacular colors and cooler temperatures for the next month. The St. John's luncheon was a great success. Father Anton and his



team continue to live up to our high expectations. Six Forever Young were able to join us as our honoured guests. It is always a pleasure to sit around a table with these wise and seasoned ladies.

Some RWTO members have graciously volunteered to join Goodwill's 'We Care'. We have Holiday cards to write, drivers to organize for future luncheons and Christmas gift treats to prepare. I am looking forward to working with you and to having your help.

If you know of someone who could use a little pick me up, 'We've Got Your Back' still has a few lovely lap blankets to share. Many thanks go out to our awesome knitters who gave time and resources to make this possible.

If you have any concerns or would just like to chat, please call or email me at (905) 892-8203 or jharlos6@gmail.com. I look forward to hearing from you.

A quick reminder that temperatures are falling and some of our venues may be a little chilly. I suggest that you bring a little shawl to our next luncheons.

Membership Report by Clara Warden, Membership Convenor

Welcome back and thank you for renewing your Membership. I am happy to announce that we are maintaining our Membership numbers and have 9 new members this year.

Currently, we have 330 paid members and 8 Social members. We have added 2 new Life members for a total of 12 Life members.

New members for 2023 are: Jennifer DiMarco, Lesia Farrell, Helga Hochmeister, Sarah Jane, Dianne Marshall, Vicki Miller, Maria Reade, Donna Seymour, and Shelley Sutherland.

A "Meet and Greet" for New Members was held on October 3, 2023, at the home of Marg Newby, one of our members. Executive members described their roles, Interest Groups were explained, upcoming October luncheon information was given. Questions were invited and chat time provided, as well as refreshments, baked goods, and fruit.

If you are aware of a retired teacher who might be interested in joining our organization, please contact Linda Foster, Marilyn Emmett, Margo Smith or myself, Clara Warden. Our best advertisement is through word of mouth, and we rely on you to help promote our organization.



Issues and Concerns by Marg Newby, Issues and Concerns Convenor

Support Options as We Age

Page 10 of our September "Connections" Issue is worth posting on your fridge and filing with your Power of Attorney for Health documents. Page 10 provides information on how to access both Long Term Care and in-home services such as Health and Personal Care, Homemaking and End of Life Care.

In order to access services, we have to contact the **Provincial Home and Community Care Support Services Offices (HCCSS)** at 310-2222 (no area code). Your call will be automatically directed to your local office.

Insurance Report by Susan McLaughlin, Insurance Convenor

As the weather turns colder, we are reminded that slip and slide season is coming. I want to remind you that the RWTO /OERO Insurance plan (Manulife) will give you coverage when you break a bone. The amount varies depending on the site of the injury. Comfort care is offered if you stay in the hospital for more than three days. After you return home, if your injury means that you cannot continue with your normal life, you can apply for \$72.50 a week for four weeks if you were an outpatient, or \$350.00 a month for up to six months if you were hospitalized for more than three days.

You can find mail-in claim forms to file on our RWTO website or you can file electronically with Manulife on their website. Use your green and white card to find all the information that you need for your claim. The advantage of filing online is that you do not need to have the doctor fill in a claim form. Manulife chases them down.

Issues and Concerns

Available Support Options As We Age: The Senior Living Sector

Most of us have experienced in some way, either in seeking direct support for a loved one or in obtaining support for ourselves, the determination and advocacy required to obtain the care and services to enable continued living in the family home, or preparing for a move to a safe and secure environment that will meet the senior's needs. In last year's articles, we explored ways to ensure that accommodations to our home, attention to our lifestyle choices as well as planning for future issues related to aging, all contributed to aging in place with more control. Similarly, knowing what our options are will help us to navigate the healthcare system when our needs require more intervention.

At our recent convention in Kingston, there was a workshop entitled Long Term Care, Janice, the presenter, works as a long term care advisor, providing her clients with her knowledge and understanding of the process of accessing and acquiring the appropriate supports for her client's needs. I found her overview of the 'senior living sector' helpful. I will begin with what might be called the 'entry level' of access, contacting the Home and Community Care Support Services, previously known as the Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs). Home and Community Care Support Services organizations provide patient care including home care and long-term care home placement services and facilitate access to community services. HCCSS organizations are responsible for deciding who receives care, the level of care you need and for how long.

The province is divided into geographical areas, and those areas divided into community offices. Once contact is made by either telephone or email to that office, no need for a doctor's referral, you will be introduced to a case manager or care coordinator. That person will determine if you qualify for government funded services or would put you in contact with community agencies, which may require a co-payment. The case manager will arrange for a home visit and then determine the services that you need and which ones will be funded and those that will not. Regardless,

the HCCSS will assist you in finding community services. Here is a list of some of the in-home services available through Home and Community Care Support Services:

1. Health care professionals in nursing care, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech language therapy
 2. Personal care in washing and bathing, health care, preventative skin care, routine hand or foot care
 3. Homemaking, i.e. housecleaning, doing laundry, shopping, banking.
 4. End of life care at home, i.e. nursing and personal care, medical supplies, including low-cost medication for seniors through the Ontario Drug Benefit Plan, tests, hospital and sickroom equipment.
- Government funded services are delivered by health professionals and personal support workers who are under contract with your Home and Community Care Support Services organization. This article has provided a brief summary of the information that is provided on the Ontario Ministry of Health's 'Home and Community Care' web page.

Contact your local HCCSS office by:
• Calling the provincial number: 310-2222 (no area code required). This service will automatically direct your call to the nearest office from your calling location.
• Using the online map locator available on website to access your local office telephone or email address.
• Email HCCSSinfo@ontario.ca for general information.

Submitted by
Lyns Sultan
Issues and Concerns Convenor



Meet and Greet for New Members held on Tuesday, October 3, 2023



A Meet and Greet for New Members was held on Tuesday, October 3, 2023, at the home of one of our Executive members, Marg Newby.

We welcomed three new members: Jennifer DiMarco, Vicki Miller, and Donna Seymour.

Refreshments of coffee, tea, and water and plates of baked goods and fruit were provided.

This was a lovely opportunity for some of the executive to chat with the new members and for the new members to ask questions and learn about the many activities that our branch has to offer.

Thank you to Marg Newby for offering her lovely home for

this function and the Membership committee, Clara Warden, Patt Chivers, Emily Lomas-Gale, Marilyn Emmett, Linda Gaudet and Janis Harlos for preparing this lovely event.

Submitted by Melanie Kelch, President

Two RWTO/OERO Memories of Remembrance Day

As we approach Remembrance Day this year, we are again facing upheaval in our world. We often only think of Remembrance Day as honouring those who served in World War I and World War II. However, we must also remember those who served in Korea, Vietnam and Afghanistan, as well as most recently Ukraine and Israel.

It is sometimes forgotten that we have members and friends who are directly impacted by war and its effects. We have members who actually served in conflict. There are also those whose family served and sacrificed.

This past year Diane Brooks and Florence Tripp's great-nephew, Cole Zelenco, a former member of the Canadian Armed Forces and released from service so that he could fight in Ukraine, was killed in the eastern battleground of Bakhmut.

Cole served two tours in Ukraine in 2022 and 2023. He was a former Canadian Army medic and was among a team of search and rescue operators who travelled to Kyiv last year. He has officially been declared a hero in Ukraine.

Cole was laid to rest in St. Catharines on May 25, 2023. May he and all others who have served our country and many others be remembered at this time.
Submitted by Melanie Kelch, President



The RWTO/OERO Wreath will be placed at the St. Catharines Cenotaph, St. Paul Street, St. Catharines, this Remembrance Day

November 11th is approaching, and I thought that I would let you know a few details about my parents, Harold James Butler's and Margaret Stewart Scott Butler's involvement in WWII.

My Dad boarded the SS Nerissa in Halifax in mid-April 1941 on his way to begin Officer training at Sandhurst Military College, England. On April 30, 1941, the ship was torpedoed by a German u-boat in the Irish Sea. According to the u-boat captain, it took just over 4 minutes for the Nerissa to sink. Only one third of the 200 passengers survived, my dad being one of them.



When the war started, my Mom joined the Canadian Women's Army Corp in Montreal. She was one of the 10% chosen to serve overseas as an Army Driver in London. Mom met my dad in the summer of 1943 while he was training at Sandhurst. They were married February 12, 1944. Rations were tight so my Montreal aunts sent the wedding dress and cake. Mom's army family provided the lunch. A couple of months later she was honorably discharged and returned to Montreal because a pregnant woman could not serve in the

military, especially a hot zone.

My dad joined the D-Day invasion in 1944, serving as a tank commander. He was part of the Liberation of the Netherlands. My brother Jim was born on January 10, 1945. My Dad was reunited with my Mom and his new son in August 1945. They went on to have seven more children.

My parents rarely spoke of the horrors they encountered. or the sacrifices made during those war years, concentrating instead on details of their courtship and the good times.

Submitted by Janis Butler Harlos, Proud Daughter

Congratulations to Christine Honsinger. Christine's son, Bryce, was recently awarded the Prime Minister's Award for Excellence in Teaching. He was presented the award at St. Davids Public School where he is a teacher. In the article about Bryce, he speaks very highly of the influence his mother had on his teaching career. How wonderful for Christine, and her family, to be able to participate in this honour with her son.



INTEREST GROUPS, October 2023

A special Thank You to all our Interest Group Leaders for all their efforts in providing a wide variety of activities that help us stay connected. We very much appreciate your commitment and dedication as these groups are such an important part of our organization.

Currently:

The Travelogue Group is still looking for anyone interested in joining the bus trip to **New York City**, June 18 – 21, 2024. See flyer on the next page and contact Marilyn Weber at (905) 934-3858

The Out 'n About Group continues to collect names of those interested in attending the **Shaw Festival** next spring to see My Fair Lady and/or Sherlock Holmes and the Mysteries of the Human Heart. Contact: Kathleen Bradley

And there are still spaces for anyone who wishes to join us to create an **Urn with a Twist** at The Watering Can Flower Market in Vineland on Thursday November 23rd. Contact: Kathleen Bradley

And as always, if you have an idea for a new Interest Group or a one-day special event, please contact Kathleen Bradley



Friday Afternoon Walkers

October Divas Dinner at Just Cooking in Vineland.



Empire Travel & RWTO New York Sightseeing

4 days: June 18 – 21, 2024



Take a bite of the Big Apple with **Empire Travel and RWTO**, with tour highlights including a guided tour of New York City, a scenic dinner cruise, a visit to the 9/11 Memorial and Museum, a behind the scenes tour of Radio City Music Hall, and plenty of free time to explore!

Day One: Meet your travelling companions and enjoy a scenic drive through the States of New York and Pennsylvania. Spend the next three nights just outside Manhattan in a quiet New Jersey neighbourhood (Fairfield Inn East Rutherford Meadowlands).

Day Two: This morning we seize the day with a fabulous, guided city tour of New York City! Take in the iconic sights and sounds of the world's most famous metropolis. Afterwards, explore at your own pace. From shopping to fine dining and entertainment, there's a little something for everyone. We return to the hotel at 7:30pm.

Day Three: Rise and shine! This morning we take a fascinating backstage tour of Radio City Music Hall, followed by a tour of the 9/11 Museum, a monument to human dignity, courage, and sacrifice. Reflect, rest or reset with a bit of free time before a lovely dinner cruise. We return to the hotel at 9:30pm.

Day Four: This morning we depart for home. Enjoy the relaxing journey back, with a special shopping excursion at the Waterloo Outlets (New York) before crossing the border.

Pick up details: Departing from St. Catharines at 8:00 a.m. Location TBD.



GreatCanadianHolidays.com

Travel Arrangements Made by:
Great Canadian Holidays, 100 Conestoga College Boulevard, Unit 1118
Kitchener, ON, N2P 2N6 519 896 8687 T1COW2280154



Price Includes:

- 3 nights accommodation
- 3 breakfasts (hotel)
- Services of a tour director
- Guided tour of New York City
- Tour of Radio City Music Hall
- Visit to the 9/11 Memorial Museum
- Dinner Cruise
- Free time to explore
- Shopping excursion to Waterloo Outlets (New York)
- Luxury motor coach transportation

\$1840 Single

\$1340 Twin

\$1290 Triple

\$1240 Quad

For more information
or to book, contact:

Aga Tempelaars-Goik

905 580 2204

aga@empiretravel.ca

www.empiretravel.ca/aga

