RWTO ANNUAL REPORT
2017-2018

Retired Women Teachers of Ontario,
Organisation des Enseignantes Retraitees de l’Ontario
St. Catharines, Ontario
In Memoriam
2017-2018
With Loving Memories of Our Friendships

Claire Cameron
Barbara Mekbeb
Joyce Montgomery
Jean Johnston
Marjorie Ovenden
Kathleen Fritz
Myrna Kroeker
Cathy Collins
ANNUAL REPORT
2017-2018

presented
at the
Annual General
Meeting
and Luncheon
Wednesday,
May 23rd, 2018

Royal Niagara Golf Club
Niagara on the Lake,
Ontario

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IN MEMORIAM

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BACK COVER COLLAGE
PRESIDENT’S REPORT

Susan McLaughlin

It seems like yesterday, when last May, I took on the role as your president. So many things have been accomplished since then. We have had four wonderful luncheons with interesting entertainment.

We have been serenaded by the voices of WomEnchant and we “belted out” tunes to the strumming “Ukesters”. At Christmas, our voices harmonized to familiar carols with John Butler and Chris McLaughlin. In April, the CEO of the Shaw Festival Theatre, Tim Jennings, drew us into the world of theatre, revealed the Shaw history and described what is in ahead “behind the curtains”.

The dynamic Dawn Cavasin, Habitat for Humanity Women Build, will illustrate in May 2018 the role of women in the “trades” and invite RWTO to volunteer with on-site lunches. And finally, we have begun to book our programs for the upcoming year and invite additional suggestions for the future from our members.

We are grateful to Clarice West-Hobbs for organizing an invaluable workshop on “Estate, Wills and Probate” presented by Port Colborne lawyer, Christopher E.H. Wilson. His expertise equipped our members with tips and a plan in hand.

The Interest groups continued to meet throughout the year. These activities are the heart of our organization as we participate, socialize and form bonds with one another. That is the beauty of “Caring and Sharing”. I am always impressed by how supportive our members are of one another.

The Executive met regularly. These ladies are the machine that make our Branch run so smoothly. They plan and work behind-the-scenes to provide our members with a good RWTO experience. This year, we decided to work towards a more eco-friendly approach. With that in mind,
we purchased a projector to use instead of paper at our meetings and luncheons. Now, we need to train ourselves to use it well! We also purchased a new computer so that we can consolidate and store our records more effectively.

Our Community Outreach projects have run very well, under the capable leadership of Patti Malkiewich. At our luncheons this year, Patti led us with humour to collect gently used or new bras and lingerie for the “Free the Girls” initiative. Girls in Third World countries who are desperately seeking an escape from the ravages of the “sex trade” industry and societal rejection acquire independence by creating legitimate businesses with the sale of this “merchandise”. Because of the generosity and willingness of our RWTO members to embrace this project, it was a huge success. We thank you for standing together for this cause. And because of our commitment to women helping women, this project has been submitted for review by the Provincial RWTO to be judged for the “Feather in Your Hat” award to be announced at the June Convention.

A big ‘thank you’ goes out to Linda Holmes (Fairview Mall, Arthritis Wrapping), Jessica Thomson (Rankin Run for Cancer) and to all of our members who have supported these projects and thoughtfully contributed to Community Care at Christmas.

As for the upcoming St. Catharines Convention of 2019, “A Barrel of Fun”, our very organized Marilyn Emmett set the wheels in motion with her brand of infectious enthusiasm. Once again, our supportive members are willing and ready for action to ensure that this huge project is a success. The Call to Convention for 2019 will take place this year by the Convention delegates at the Nottawasaga Inn, Orillia. My role was to develop our Branch lyrical song and our skit was created by our exuberant Patti Malkiewich. Now, the delegate rehearsals will be key and as will be the many volunteers in 2019.

This year, our Branch had the privilege of nominating one of our own, Judith Bennoch, our Membership Convenor and Area 13 Director, to the position of Provincial Program Coordinator.

Now that I am finally getting a “handle on the job”, the year is ending! I have really enjoyed my role as your president and been so pleased with all of the good work by our members. Because of our many capable members, who all work to support each other, everything gets done, and then some. Thank you to all the many women who made my job easier.
TREASURER’S REPORT AND FINANCIAL SUMMARY

LINDA FOSTER

Our budget year runs from April 1, 2017 - March 31, 2018.

This year, our income was $2201.64 less than our expenses and so we used money from our reserves to pay for our additional expenses. We ended the year with $15657.45 in the bank.

Our membership dues of $45.00 will remain the same for the coming year. $40.00 is sent to Provincial and in return we receive a rebate from Provincial. Social members pay $15.00 as their provincial dues are paid in another branch of RWTO. From Provincial, each Branch received $300.00. This money was to be used to assist with membership.

The luncheon venues have increased their prices. Our Social Convenor, Louise Farquhar makes every attempt to keep our cost within the $30.00 we pay. As a result, we have very little income from our luncheons.

Our Executive made the decision to purchase a computer and projector to be used at both Executive and General meetings, and as a result, our Branch expenses were much higher than the amount we budgeted.

We continue to support the Rankin Run in May and Community Care at Christmas. We donated $150.00 to the Rankin Run and $785.00 to Community Care.
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MEMBERSHIP REPORT
JUDITH BENNOCH

For the 4th straight year our membership hovers around the 400 mark! Quite an accomplishment!

As of April 25, 2018, we have 380 Regular members plus an additional 13 Social members and 11 Life members for a grand total of 404 members. We recognized 12 of our 19 new members at our September and October meetings. This year we also honoured long time member Anna Thwaites with a Life Membership. Between July 2017 and May 2018, we were saddened by the loss of eight of our members.

I greatly appreciate the essential role and work of our Affiliate Liaisons, Donna Painter, Margo Smith and Clara Warden. A goal for our Membership Committee this year was to target retiring secondary teachers. In support of this goal a special flyer was created and hand delivered, by the committee members, to every secondary school in the area. These ladies are a vital support at our luncheons assisting at the registration desk, greeting new members, making sure everyone has a
place to sit and collecting door prize tickets. As always, the general membership, through personal connections, provides vital links for gathering new members. This is truly the backbone of our organization.

As I may be moving on to a new position on the Provincial Board next year, I find it necessary to leave the role of membership. I would like to thank the Membership Committee, and all those many members who continue to support our efforts and especially Linda Foster - the link between Membership and Treasurer is essential. I enjoyed moving from my position as ETFO Liaison in 2013 into the position of Assistant Membership and then Membership. This role provided the opportunity to meet so many of our members. How lucky was I!

Finally, renewing your membership in a timely manner is the most essential support you can provide for the roles of membership and treasurer. Please renew for 2018-2019 as soon as requested.
INTEREST GROUPS

NADINE MARTIN

After a very long winter, I am convinced that we are all happy to welcome the warmer weather. Our walking groups will have a spring in their steps as they meet for weekly walks through Port Dalhousie and hikes at a variety of destinations in the area.

The diverse variety of interest groups available are so well attended. A second Euchre group is up and running. The Dining Divas is extremely popular, as is the Lunch Bunch. The Revolving Book Club and Let's Talk About It book club are very well received.

Travelogue is an inspiring opportunity to learn about new destinations and to share travel experiences and pictures.

Singing for Fun started two years ago and has mushroomed. It is fun and “the beat goes on”! New groups were suggested in the fall. Pole walking and theatre excursions to Shaw or Stratford were mentioned.

New leaders are welcome to start up a group. Just let me know and I will post a sign-up sheet in the fall at the luncheon. Although Sign-up sheets will be set out in September, some activities may not be available depending on a capacity limit since some groups meet in individuals' homes and space is an issue.

I look forward to seeing you at the various activities with my camera in hand to capture the fun. May I encourage everyone to participate in these groups if you have not yet done so.
GOODWILL REPORT

ALICE BRADNAM

While visiting my dear 94 year old mother-in-law, I reflected on the wall plaque, “Live every moment, Laugh every day, Love beyond words”. We are fortunate to have so many varied opportunities to get involved by “caring and sharing” with friends through “fun” RWTO events and activities. As we transition to new seasons of life, this participation is one way to thrive and to avoid social isolation.

It has been a pleasure to connect with members of our “Forever Young” group of eleven ladies through special occasion cards, flowers, small gifts, phone calls and visits. These ladies never cease to inspire me with their wisdom and interesting stories of a lifetime well lived. Our oldest member, Anne Macdonald, is in her 104th year. New to the group are Mary Jane Tanner and Bev Davies, who were welcomed at the September luncheon.

Christmas and birthday cards were sent to about sixty women over the age of eighty. Thank you for keeping me informed of anyone who would appreciate get well, sympathy, “thinking of you” or thank you cards.

Also, if you know those who would appreciate visits or receiving phone calls, OR if you would like to periodically visit or make a phone call (especially when it’s hard to get out), please let me know. Perhaps healthy connections could emerge....... Imagine the possibilities!!

Contact: Alice Bradnam(905-934-7108) alicebradnam@aol.com

April 2018
Luncheon Friends
The Free The Girls initiative, suggested by Violette Hagerty, has been a great success, thanks to the generosity of our Members. Three hundred and thirty-three bras (over 2/3 of that total were brand new) and three hundred and thirty-five dollars was collected at the Christmas and April luncheons to help defray the shipping costs. Our Branch's collective response to the challenge was overwhelming, and incredibly compassionate.

The Rankin Run for Cancer is a must event in May for our members. The group of 27 walkers chose either the 1km or 5km distance and brought in $7,296.00 in donations! Myrna Kroeker, once again, raised the most funds: $3,000.00! The donations to fight cancer stay in the Niagara region for our hospitals, hospice and Wellspring. On May 26, 2018, our members will once again participate or sponsor this critical fundraiser.

The Arthritis Christmas Gift Wrapping at the Fairview Mall, brought in $11,904.00, an increase of $1,000.00 over last year's total. Linda Holmes the R.W.T.O. coordinator, reports that 73 of our members gave their time for the charity. Community Care donations at the Christmas luncheon totaled $5,000.00! Mary Lou Souter, from Community Care, was there to accept the cheque. The giving didn't stop there. Seventeen members volunteered at the Christmas Toy Bureau. Our St. Catharines R.W.T.O. Branch is a sharing and caring force. Bravo!
This year we have the benefit of three enhancements to our Hospital and Home Care Plan:

**Transportation Benefit:** Now includes coverage for cost of transportation by volunteer drivers for the Canadian Cancer Society to a maximum of $100.00 (combined with other transportation benefits).

**Mobility Assistance Benefit:** Now includes Ergonomic walking poles, when prescribed by a physician, up to current maximum of $150.00 per injury or sickness.

**Hearing Aid Benefit:** Now includes coverage for charges or purchase of cochlear implants up to current maximum of $200.00 every four years.

Given the freedom that we all enjoy with retirement, sometimes it becomes difficult to contact one another via voice mail. Therefore, the best way to contact me is by using my email address: christine.graham794@gmail.com. Please include specific details that require some assistance and I will respond as quickly as possible.

**CORA BAILEY AWARDS**

Cora Bailey, from the Peterborough Branch, was a dedicated member who served as the first Executive Secretary Treasurer for eleven years until 1982. She, also, wrote, “The History Book - OASWT 1956-1976.” The annual Cora Bailey Award, which began in 2003, is granted to, up to three, Branch members who have contributed outstanding service to their Branch.
Judith’s 36 years in education began in 1971 in her hometown of Thunder Bay. Her career included regular classroom, vocal music, physical education, and special education teaching. She led school choirs, bands, and sign language clubs, and coached volleyball, cross country, and basketball in Lakehead, Lake Superior, and Toronto school boards. During this time, Judith also served as a local FWTAO Secretary.

In her last twenty years with the public school boards in Toronto, Judith held positions of add responsibility, including: Program Consultant, Central Coordinator Special Education, and Principal of Special Education. She also worked on Ministry of Education Committees relating to funding, Early Years, and the development of new Special Education Exceptionality definitions. After retiring to Niagara-on-the-Lake in 2007, Judith worked as a consultant for Virtual Expert Clinics New Brunswick, introducing online autism programming to school boards across Ontario from 2008-2011.

Judith joined the St Catharines RWTO in 2009, where she became the Co-Convenor of the 2011 Convention Communication Committee. Judith has participated in the Revolving Book Club, Community Outreach Committee, Dining Divas, Singing for Fun, Arthritis Gift Wrapping and the Community Care Toy Bureau. On our executive, Judith served as the ETFO Liaison (2011-2013), the Assistant Chair /Chair of Membership (2013-2018). She assisted with the revision of our Branch Handbook and is on the St Catharines 2019 Convention Committee. Most recently, Judith has been Area Director 4/13 (2015-2018.)

Judith’s love of singing finds her in the St David’s/Queenston United Church Choir, the Sun City Shadow Hills Community Singers, and the St. John’s Lutheran Celebration Singers in California. Judith had her acting debut in 2017 in the Performing Arts Club. Locally, she still finds time, along with her husband, to run the weekly Mixed Golf League at Beechwood Golf and Social Club.

Judith treasures time spent with her family spread across Canada and the US, especially her two California grandchildren. She strives to be a supportive, empathetic, and caring team player, and is thankful for her many blessings. Judith thanks the RWTO St Catharines members for the honour and privilege of being a Cora Bailey recipient. The branch is pleased to honour Judith with this well-deserved award.
Kathleen was schooled in the Hamilton-Stoney Creek area from elementary school until her McMaster graduation. Her career began in 1969 as an Attached Teacher, an extra teacher within a school with no classroom of her own. She worked half-time at Maple Grove PS withdrawing small groups from K & 1 and half-time at Campden PS where she was part of the rotary schedule. The next year she had her “own” class at Jacob Beam PS where she stayed until 1992, teaching grades two through six. She finished her career at Woodland PS, specializing in junior grades, with Grade 8 English on rotary.

Kathleen retired in June of 2005 and joined RWTO St. Catharines that September, a clear indication that here was a woman who would be an asset to our Branch! The variety of Interest Groups is what makes the St Catharines RWTO Branch unique. Kathleen became the Convenor of every Interest Group that she joined. She led Golf, Gourmet Cooking and Dining Divas. On the Executive, Kathleen was the Interest Group Convenor and 2nd Vice President then was willing to jump to President due to some unexpected changes. This year, she served as the Past President and is now preparing for the Convention of 2019 as Tours Convenor.

Kathleen has been, for 50 years, a member of Beta Sigma Phi Sorority, an International Women’s Organization. Within the Stoney Creek and St. Catharines Chapters, she has held every Executive position. Kathleen also participates in Lifelong Learning Niagara, which is a volunteer organization providing learning opportunities for seniors, through a lecture series twice each year. She works part-time as a Gift Registry Consultant at Home Outfitters, the highlight of which is reconnecting with former students or their parents who are setting up or shopping for a Bridal Registry. Now, she can celebrate these new milestones with them and hear of their life pathways.

Kathleen has enjoyed her time on the executive and especially, working with the excellent women who keep our Branch running. She and her husband, Paul, reside in St Catharines and their son, Matthew, in Ottawa.

RWTO is pleased to welcome Kathleen as a deserving recipient of the Cora Bailey Award.
Violette’s youth in Niagara was eventful, whether training with track clubs, baton-twirling in parades, walking fashion show runways, delivering “The Standard”, or donning her softball glove or judogi. Brock University conferred her degree after her start at Western. After her eight beginning years of teaching at Notre Dame Academy in Waterdown, it sadly closed. She returned to Niagara and for the next twenty-seven years continued secondary school teaching, coaching, running ski clubs and coordinating fashion show fundraisers.

Violette completed multiple Ministry of Education Specialist programs including the Principals’ Courses. She served on multiple board committees for career development, curriculum writing, post-secondary transitions and with OSSTF for Political Action. In 1998, Violette was honoured with an Excellence in Education Award from OSSTF, District 22. Following a skiing injury, and after years of teaching fulfilment with her beloved students, she reluctantly retired in 2011 as Director of Student Services.

The RWTO “sisterhood” made easier Violette’s transition to retirement. The Executive, Interest Groups (Picasa Course, Singing for Fun, Travelogue and En Plein Air), the luncheons, along with activities such as the Arthritis Wrap, the Community Toy Bureau and the Rankin Cancer Run, provided the comradery of new friendships. As Branch Secretary for five consecutive years, Violette is kept hopping with extensive clerical responsibilities and the Annual Report (with rescues from others). Beyond this, her hand or camera is evident in helping numerous behind-the-scenes Branch activities including RWTO’s 60th, luncheons, Interest groups, the 2019 Convention, or simply making home visits.

For twelve years, Violette advocated for seniors as member/Chair of Linhaven’s and Niagara’s Regional Homes’ Family Advisory Councils. Her passion for cinema and theatre attracts her to TIFF, SHAW, BUFS, PAC, CINEFEST and Toronto’s Mirvish productions. “Nana” (Violette) and “Puppa” (Harvie) follow the Blue Jays at away-games, enjoy trips abroad, and delight in cruising HWY 407 to spend invaluable time with their “Brooklin-ite” family, of loving son and daughter-in-law, Trevor and Yvette, and their 3.5yr old “caped-crusader” grandson, Nixon.

This Award is a true honour for which Violette is grateful. RWTO welcomes this deserving Cora Bailey recipient, Violette.
Thank you for your service to RWTO!
HONORARY PRESIDENTS - ST. CATHARINES BRANCH

2017 – 2018  BONNIE TAYLOR GILLINGS
2016 – 2017  JOANNE ATKINSON
2015 – 2016  GERALDINE WAUD
2014 – 2015  SHARON THORNE
2013 – 2014  GLENNICE WILKINSON
2012 – 2013  CAROL BELL
2011 – 2012  JOAN SISLER-VELLS
2010 – 2011  ANJA JOKELA
2009 – 2010  AGNES WIILER
2008 – 2009  JEAN JOHNSTON
2007 – 2008  ROSE STACEY
2006 – 2007  ANNE MANJOS
2005 – 2006  GERALDINE YOUNG
2004 – 2005  ELSIE SEDDON
2003 – 2004  JUANITA RATHBUN
2002 – 2003  MARION MOORADIAN
2001 – 2002  MARION MURRAY
2000 – 2001  LORRAINE FORSEY
1999 – 2000  CATHERINE DOYLE
1998 – 1999  ERMA SHERK
1997 – 1998  DORIS FLEMINGTON
1996 – 1997  VI TAGGART
1995 – 1996  ALICE OGDEN
1994 – 1995  GERALDINE YOUNG
PROPOSED SLATE OF OFFICERS: 2018-2019
ST. CATHARINES BRANCH

HONORARY PRESIDENT  BETH KENT

TABLE OFFICERS
PAST PRESIDENT           SUSAN MCLAUGHLIN
PRESIDENT                PATTI MALKIEWICH
1ST VICE PRESIDENT       JANIS HARLOS
2ND VICE PRESIDENT       SUSAN LEWIS
TREASURER / MEMBERSHIP   LINDA FOSTER
SECRETARY                VIOLETTE HAGERTY

CONVENORS
ARCHIVIST/WEBSITE         JESSICA THOMSON
INSURANCE                CHRIS GRAHAM
INTEREST GROUPS          NADINE MARTIN
ISSUES & CONCERNS         MARG NEWBY
COMMUNICATION            MARILYN EMMETT
GOODWILL                 ALICE BRADNAM
TELEPHONE                SHEILA BENER
PROGRAM                  JANIS HARLOS/ SUSAN LEWIS
SOCIAL                   LOUISE FARQUHAR (BETTY TIECHE)

REPRESENTATIVES
ETFO                      DONNA PAINTER
OECTA                     CLARA WARDEN
OSSTF                     MARGO SMITH

ANNUAL REPORT 2017-2018: Editorial Team

Violette Hagerty
Branch Secretary, Co-Editor & Designer

Judy Crompton
Co-Editor
Thank You
RWTO St. Catharines for caring, sharing and having fun