

Report Thirty-One

Published by RTO/ERO District 31 Wellington



President's Message

Happy New Year and welcome to 2018. In this 50th Anniversary Commemorative Newsletter, we are celebrating the 50th Anniversary of RTO-ERO. The Provincial Committee for our celebrations is chaired by David Kendall. Our local committee is chaired by Brenda McGinnis. I appreciate the planning and work done by each of these committees and the Chairs.



To ensure that our members receive newsletters, goodwill cards, and other communication please be aware that, according to Canada Post, rural addresses should be:

Name

Fire Number and Road

Rural Route

City, Province

Postal Code

Also note that we have a Facebook page: RTO District 31 Wellington (@wellingtonretirededucators) and we continue to use our webpage: www.rto31.org.

Please let your friends, who are not yet members of our great organization with all its benefits know that they can join at any time by contacting RTO-ERO at www.rto-ero.org or 1-800-361-9888 (416-962-9463) or info@rto-ero.org. Also invite them to our RPW on March 20, 2018 at Victoria Park East Golf Club starting at 5:30. They will be able to register soon at www.Rto-ero.org.

Enjoy the articles in the Newsletter and reserve Thursday May 3, 2018 to attend our Special Spring Lunch.

History of our RTO Newsletter

History of our Newsletter

The first copy of our newsletter was published in February 1992. At that time RTO-ERO was known as Superannuated Teachers of Ontario. Our newsletter was simply called "S.T.O. District 31 Newsletter". The prime objective was to "provide our members with news about activities, special events and important information of interest to them."

The first newsletter was produced by the editorial committee of Cathy Collins, Gerry Barnhill and Jess White. Cathy Collins remained as editor of our newsletter until Anne Smith took over in 2005.

In the Fall of 1995, the S.T.O. newsletter received a new masthead thanks to the contributions of two of our members. Stephen Lewis designed the attractive and symbolic graphic which incorporated both learning and leisure. Superimposed on the mountain scenery was the new name of STOWAY, which was the winning entry submitted by John Akin to our "Name the Newsletter Contest".

One of the special aspects of the original newsletter was a feature about some of our members. The first such feature was written by Fred Dack who wrote a biographical sketch of a member who had made a significant contribution to education and to our District 31 unit - Emery Nelson. Emery was our first president of District 31. After serving as Superintendent of Schools and successfully promoting the instrumental music program, Emery retired in 1977. He considered retirement "a wonderful institution." He was an active member of the Fergus Rotary Club where he was a charter president in 1966. He curled during the winter and golfed in the summer "as long as he didn't have to keep score." He thoroughly enjoyed working with wood and in his retirement built two cottages. When District 31 was formed, Emery became our first president and then stayed on as Treasurer of District 31 for several years.

The tradition of articles about our RTO-ERO members

continued for a while and included some of the following fascinating information about some RTO-ERO members whom you might recognize and remember. These members illustrate quite clearly that there is a great life to be had after retiring from very fulfilling careers.

In the Fall 1996 issue of the newsletter, Mary Ann Hunt wrote an interesting article about George Kron who, since retiring, had found an enjoyable and fulfilling pursuit in raising emus which was the culmination of a life-long interest in birds. The emu is raised for both meat and for oil. The meat is low in fat and relatively free of cholesterol. It is found in gourmet restaurants. The emu oil is a deep penetrating oil which is bacteria static. As a result, it is in great demand by pharmaceutical and cosmetic companies. George's advice to new retirees is: "Find something that is interesting and meaningful for you, something that will give you pleasure".

In the Fall, 1996 issue, Jess White wrote a feature on Ann Smith who in 1952 graduated from the Ontario Agricultural College with a degree in Dairy Husbandry - the first woman to be enrolled in this program. Ann felt strongly about experiential learning and was the first teacher to bring a high school class to the Arboretum. Her students were transported to University biology lectures and campus labs to observe research first hand. To provide these learning opportunities, Ann got her school bus driver's license and personally drove the bus to lectures! In retirement, Ann continued to contribute to the community. She participated in many activities including The Guelph Round Table on Environment and Economy, Guelph 2000, "Trees for Guelph", the Guelph Trail Club, Guelph Field Naturalists and the Canadian Federation of University Women.

In the Spring 1997 issue, George Hindley wrote an article about RTO/ERO member, Peter Gordon Reid who had passed away in the previous Fall. Gord, as George referred to him in the article, enlisted in the Canadian Army in 1942 and served overseas until 1945. In 1956, he was appointed principal of GCVI. Among the highlights of his career was the construction of a new wing in the early 1960's replacing the old stone Collegiate. Gord retired in 1971 and pursued his long-time hobbies - the building of a cottage (with the good Scottish name of "Corriechrevie") on the Saugeen in his beloved Bruce County, the researching and editing of the 416 page "History of Elderslie Township" (the township of his birthplace), as well as the developing and cementing of his ties with his ancestral Scotland. Regarding the latter, he seized the opportunity to teach for a year in Glasgow, making many friends while doing so.

In the Winter issue of 1997, Bonnie Schotsch shared the story of how she and her husband and four friends took a journey on their Honda Goldwings in the U.S. along the

Skyline Drive through the Shenandoah National Forest, on to the Blue Ridge Mountain Parkway, ending in the Great Smoky Mountains of North Carolina. They left on September 10th ("a week after school had started and my former yard duty day") and headed south. They covered 3950 km and were gone for 12 days. They were sorry to see this memorable trip come to an end. "We had met so many friendly folks in the USA - helpful when we needed directions and many curious ones when they found out how far we 'mature bikers' had traveled. We are already planning another trip for next summer... Having been teaching for 38 years, it is difficult to realize that I'm actually free to travel in September, January or whenever. Great isn't it? I urge everyone who is thinking of retiring - do it when you can and ENJOY!!"

In the Fall of 1998, Ann Graham wrote about how retirement had given her and her husband Ken "a great opportunity to explore some of their many dreams." One of their main retirement activities was becoming traveling volunteers for the organization "Sleeping Children Around the World". They also spoke, showed slides and demonstrated kits to any organization or group that requested a speaker. Since Ann's passing, her husband Ken has continued their work with SCAW. Every Christmas, Ken presents at the Guelph Wellington Retired Women Teachers' Christmas luncheon. The GWRWT is a sister organization of RTO-ERO and many of our female members are members of both groups. In memory of Ann, Ken motivates the members of GWRWT to raise close to \$10,000 each year for this cause which is near and dear to his heart. SCAW is a 100% volunteer organization and every penny donated goes to the cost of the bed kits which are made in the country where they are distributed. This activity provides employment to third world families and is an assistance to the local economy. Ann concluded her article with the thought that "Retirement is wonderful and full of unique experiences!"

In 2002, Marjorie Fischer wrote: "In 15 years of retirement, I have stood on the edge of the Grand Canyon, watched an ice berg calve, walked on the Sahara sands, traversed the Panama Canal, attended a Papal Mass and trained a puppy. Now I co-ordinate the Patient Rep. Program at Homewood and head the banner makers for our Mission. I regularly attend the Kitchener Symphony and Drayton plays, go on day trips and attend lectures. And I still have plans."

All of these features are very precious and enjoyable. We have tried to continue this tradition in a modified way with our column "Something to Shout About..." in which we note the recent achievements of our members.

Sadly, we are missing many issues of our early newslet-

ters. If you happen to have any of these hiding in your cupboards or shelves or drawers, please pass them on to any executive members for our archives. We would be very happy to have copies of these.

In the Fall of 2003, Cathy Collins wrote the following article.

" Times changed and our Provincial organization got a new name which necessitated a change as well in the heading of our newsletter. This time it was Bonnie Schotsch who creatively incorporated the **R.T.O.** initials into our current name **Report Thirty-One**. Over the past nine years we have increased the mailing list from 350 members to approximately 900! We look forward to the near future when 1,000 copies of **Report Thirty-One** will be distributed in Wellington County."

This issue of our newsletter will be distributed to 1,334 members. Our newsletter has also grown from its initial 4-page format to our current 12-page format, but our purpose remains the same "to keep you better informed of RTO/ERO activities both at the District and Provincial levels." All suggestions are enthusiastically and warmly received!

In the winter issue of 2001, a notice went out for a webmaster to help District 31 set up a web site. At the October, 2003, executive meeting a Computer Communications Committee was set up, consisting of Dave Clutche, Marj Hamilton, Don Dewar, Paul Thompson and Cathy Collins. Guidelines for our web site and newsletter were established. These criteria remain in effect to this day. Marj Hamilton looked after the updating of this site. Then, as now, we encourage our members to visit our site which our present webmaster, John Ritchie, frequently updates.

In order to make consistent decisions about District donations, advertising in the newsletter and website and sharing goodwill with our most senior members, in 2004, the District 31 executive started to develop District policies pertaining to donations, advertising, and goodwill. Cathy Collins and Marina Howlett were responsible for developing the first Donations policy which was approved at the Annual Meeting in October 2005. In subsequent years, Marina Howlett, Pauline Brown and Joyce Barnes designed and updated the Goodwill policy. RTO-ERO requested District 31 to submit these policies to be shared with other Districts throughout the province. District 31 Executive continues to revise and update the Constitution and the various policies.

District 31 has a long, rich history of providing special events for our members. In 1999, for example, we had two golf tournaments and a curling bonspiel. Thanks

went to Mac McKinlay and his committee for organizing these activities. The names of these Bonspiels were especially interesting - "The Hogmasters Teachers' Bonspiel" and the "Thursday Relics' Bonspiel". We would be happy to host these again if we had the volunteers to help organize these events or other events that would interest members.

Since our beginning, District 31 has had a Goodwill Committee. Unfortunately, our records don't always list the chairs and members of these committees but early minutes indicate that the executive has always tried to recognize and share in the events in our mem-



bers' lives - illnesses, deaths, anniversaries, accomplishments. Bonnie Schotsch was the chair in 2002 and organized the committee into the areas of responsibility which still exist today. Committee members send cards of sympathy, support, and congratulations and we try to share these milestones in our newsletters. Under the enthusiastic leadership of Pauline Brown, one of our long-time chairs, we started sending birthday and Christmas cards to members who are 80 years and over. When Pauline retired from the executive, Joyce Barnes assumed the role of chair and we started to send floral arrangements to members on their 90th, 95th and 100th birthdays. In 2017, the committee sent out 272 Birthday and Christmas cards to our over 80 members. We also mailed out many sympathy, get well, and congratulatory cards. The committee and executive always appreciates hearing news about our members and acknowledging these important events in their lives.

Our trips provide many fun opportunities for our members. We are blessed to have Lynn Morrison as our Travel chair. Since 2003, Lynn has organized many day trips and longer trips for our members. The day trips have included excursions to Stratford to see "Hello, Dolly", "Oklahoma", "Cabaret", "Evita", "Jesus Christ Superstar", "Camelot", "42nd Street", "Fiddler on the Roof", "Carousel" and "A Chorus Line"; to the Shaw Festival to see "High Society" and "Cabaret"; to the Sony Centre to see "White Christmas"; trips to River Run to see "My Fair Lady" and "The Sound of Music"; tours of the Toyota Plant and Wings of Paradise, the Skylon Tower in Niagara Falls and a dinner theatre featuring "Oh Canada, eh?", and a Hamilton Harbour Luncheon Cruise, as well as a tour of The Ripley Aquarium and Distillery District, and

the Big Chute Boat Cruise and Johnston Cranberry Marsh and the Niagara Belle Cruise. Day trips often include side tours and always a delicious lunch and lots of fun on the bus as Lynn provides jokes, commentary, and games. Overnight trips have included trips to Chicago, New York City, Agawa Canyon and Mackinac Island, Boston and Salem and Washington D.C.. As always, for this year, Lynn has planned some very special trips which you can read about in her column.

Right from our very beginning, even when we were members of District 11, we have had the tradition of two General Meetings - one in the spring and one in the Fall. Initially, the Fall Meeting was at lunch and the Spring meeting was in the evening. After a survey a few years ago, we discovered that our members preferred two luncheon meetings. The price also increased from the initial \$3. to today's \$25. A number of things, however, have not changed. We have continued the tradition of inviting our new members to attend their first luncheon as our guests and we also continue to have one luncheon in the county and one luncheon in Guelph. We also still try to provide a delicious meal and some enjoyable entertainment. It was interesting to note that in the beginning the "entertainment" was often a guest speaker from Provincial RTO-ERO or the Federations or Provincial Parliament. The "entertainment" gradually evolved into musical entertainment which included - to name a very few - : Vocalist Gail Elliott-Ross, Keith Conrad, accomplished pianist, Barbershop Quartet, Wayne Farrier's Big BIG Band Sound, J. F. Ross Dixieland Band, Blazing Fiddles, Dave Hadfield, Peter Appleyard, James Gordon, Wendell Ferguson, The Dunn Brothers, The Wizen Old Men, Tim Lewis, Dave Davidson's Quartet, "Slide by Slide" and Innuendo. Back by popular demand for our 50th Anniversary is "Cruisin". We hope that you will join us as we celebrate our 50th Anniversary at our Spring luncheon on May 3rd at the Italian Canadian Club for some delicious food, great entertainment, and some exceptional company! Send in your registration form now to Mike Curtis.

Our Oldest Associate Member

Elsie Dandy of Fergus, Ontario, our oldest associate member, celebrated her 100th birthday on October 7, 2017. Elsie is a Second World War veteran, a retired nurse, a dedicated Legion member and a volunteer at JD Hogarth School in Fergus. She continues to volunteer with students in Grades 1 to 4 assisting them with literacy, aiding teachers with classroom tasks and is an annual presenter at Remembrance Day assemblies. "When I grow up, I want to be just like Mrs. Dandy," is an expression that has been used by both children and adults. Jim Dandy is Elsie's deceased husband. Jim was a Canadian Army Colonel who taught and trained soldiers in England during the Second

World War. Jim was Department Head of Geography and taught many years at Centre Wellington High School in Fergus, Ontario.

Spring Luncheon

Of RTO-ERO

Thursday May 3, 2018

Italian Canadian Club

Guelph

Entertainment by "Cruisin", an acaPELLa quartet who will perform treasured standards and pop hits.

Please mail your registration and \$25 to

Mike Curtis by April 12, 2018.

9450 Copeland Path,

RR#2 Erin

ON

NoB 1To

905-877-4134



Door prize winners at one of our District 31 luncheons

A Brief History of District 31

A Brief History of Wellington District 31 RTO/ERO

Source: The Districts of STO/ERO: A History 1968-1993

Our organization was once known as the Superannuated Teachers of Ontario (STO). When the first meeting of STO was held in March 1968, the voting delegates were representatives of the Ontario Teachers' Federation.

In the minutes of the first years of STO/ERO terms such as "mimeographed", "stenographer", "superannuation" appear along with spellings such as "to-morrow" and "to-day". Every name included in the minutes archive until 1969 is prefaced by "Mr." or "Mrs." or "Miss".

Later in 1968, an Extension Committee was established to organize STO into geographic areas across the province based on the provincial county board system.

On December 4, 1968, the 10 areas were set up. Wellington was part of Area 5 - Waterloo.

In 1972, the province was reorganized into 21 subdivisions to be known as Districts. We were District 11 - Waterloo-Wellington.

On January 23, 1973, the inaugural meeting of District 11 Superannuated Teachers of Ontario was held at the Breslau Hotel. Over 70 retired teachers from Wellington and Waterloo Counties attended the luncheon.

Among the speakers at this inaugural luncheon was Miss Tyrell, Provincial Secretary who presented background on superannuation and progress on moving minimum pensions to \$2,100.

Elections for the first executive of District 11 were held at the annual Fall Meeting on September 25, 1973.

President - Hebert (Peter) Denis-Nathan

Vice-President - Anna Ewan

Secretary-Treasurer - Judson Brown

Councillors - Greta MacDonald, David Wilson, W.G. Loney.

The lunch at the Breslau Hotel cost \$3.00 per person, 25 cents of which was used to defray the cost of the meeting. Local members of the Legislative Assembly were invited to the meeting for the purpose of explaining the need for an escalation clause in pensions to compensate for the increased cost of living.

This initiative was followed by the District preparing and presenting a Brief to the Ontario Cabinet meeting in Kitchener, June 11th, 1975.

The Annual General Meeting, September 25, 1978, was held at Victoria Park Golf Club, Guelph. This was the first meeting not held at the Breslau Hotel.

At the Annual Meeting of 1979, the single position of Secretary-Treasurer became two offices.

At the Annual Meeting on September 30, 1981 held at Bingeman Park, the following motion moved by Ray Mark and seconded by John Morrison was passed: That the executive of District 11 recommend to the Annual Meeting that the Provincial Executive of STO be requested to reorganize District 11 into two separate districts along county lines.

On November 5, 1981, the request to reorganize into a County of Waterloo (District 11) and a County of Wellington (District 31) was authorized by the Senate with no opposing votes.

In 1981, Wellington became District 31.

In 1981, District 11 had a bank balance of \$94.38.

The Presidents of District 11 - Waterloo-Wellington

1973-74	Peter Denis-Nathan
1974-76	Anna Ewan
1976-77	Ernie Carter
1977-78	Mary Primeau
1978-79	Gordon Loney
1979-80	John Morrison
1980-81	John Gorman

The Presidents of District 31 - Wellington

1981-1982	Emery Nelson
1982-1983	Mary Caldwell
1983-1985	John Sullivan
1985-1986	Mabel Bruder
1986-1987	Bill Cherry
1987-1988	John Strobl
1988-1989	Ernie Barber
1989-1990	Doug Long
1990-1991	Gerry Barnhill
1991-1992	Jess White

1992-1994	Bernard Kiely
1994-1996	Jim Hunt
1996-1998	John G. Akin
1998-2000	Isobel Muir
2000-2002	Paul Thompson
2002-2003	Ruth Scott
2003-2005	Robert Paul
2005-2008	Marina Howlett
2008-2011	Stephen O'Connell
2011-2015	Brenda McGinnis
2015 -	Richard Goodbrand

Banner from 1992 Newsletter



S.T.O. DISTRICT 31

Newsletter

FEBRUARY/92

ANNOUNCEMENT

Spring Dinner - May 13, 1992

Welcome to New Retirees

Plan now to attend! More information in April.

Our Most Senior District Member

Gladys Ernst celebrated her 105th birthday on June 1, 2017 and was named Ambassador of the Mount Forest Homecoming celebrations on June 24, 2017.


Gladys who was always an avid gardener retired in 1977. In July 2000, as a new millennium event, she was proud to host a horticultural society garden party at her residence. As a long time and active community citizen, she was declared Mrs. Mount Forest during a town reunion in the summer of 2002.

For the last ten years, Gladys has lived at the Saugeen Valley Nursing Centre. While Gladys is a little frail and in a wheelchair, she is very mentally alert. Early last June, a friend wheeled her to Murphy Park to check the lilac tree planted there by the Mount Forest Horticultural Society in honour of her 100th birthday. She then toured up and down Main Street.

After the parade, where Gladys rode on a float decorated by one of her former students, she was joined by 38 of her former pupils, one of whom was one of her first students, for a photograph at the Mount Forest District Sports Complex.

Gladys was the star of the Homecoming Parade on June 24, 2017. Many of her former students were very happy to see her and a former student took a picture of her and posted it on Facebook. The post received lots of comments and according to the newspaper account "many people praised the 'inspiring lady' and reminisced about her being a favourite teacher."

Gladys Ernst is an inspiration to all her fellow District 31 members!



RTO Theatre Group

We are planning to attend a performance of the new Peter Colley comedic thriller “The Ghost Island Light” at Guelph Little Theatre on Sunday April 15, 2018 at 2 pm. Depending on numbers we may be able to purchase at a reduced price. Regular price is \$22. If you are interested in being part of our group please contact Pamela Niesiobedzki-Curtis at 905-877-4134 or pniesiobedzki@hotmail.com



Executive Members at 3Smiles Masquerade Fundraiser

History of District 31

Community Involvement

Since 1999, Project-Service to Others, a Provincial RTO-ERO program, has provided grants to Districts for Initiatives that support the concept of "Service to Others". The intent is to contribute to a variety of community projects and thereby raise the profile of the RTO-ERO by demonstrating, to active members of the educational community and to the public that RTO-ERO cares about their communities and are willing to help others who need assistance.

Over the years, District 31 has initiated a number of these programs. Among these projects, which are listed in full on our website, are the following:

2002 - Nabumali Youth Hostel Project - Phase 2 Construction of a student hostel, which eventually became a secondary school

2006 - "Rollercoaster to Recovery" was a sponsorship of a second edition of a guidebook for families and support groups coping with mental illness.

2011 - "Age Strong/Fight Wrong" involved Teens and Seniors working together in workshops to promote understanding of each other and mutual respect.

2013 - Support for the Western Ontario Drama League Festival hosted by the Guelph Little Theatre

In addition, for many years, District 31 has supported The Norm Jary Golf Tournament which celebrated its 40th anniversary last July. Our district always sponsors a hole in the tournament which raises money for Community Living Guelph Wellington, a not-for-profit service agency that provides support and assistance to residents of Guelph Wellington who have an intellectual disability.

We have also carried on the tradition of every Christmas donating money to the food banks in Wellington County and to Guelph Wellington Women in Crisis.

For the past 7 years, at every Spring luncheon, members have donated new books to Action Read Community Literacy Centre which helps children and adults learn to read.

Every June, District 31 donates three secondary school bursaries. Two are presented to Upper Grand District School Board Students and one is presented to a student in Wellington Catholic District School Board. These are presented to students who have overcome significant obstacles to graduate. The schools' awards committee choose the students based on this criterion.

Over the years, past executives have also supported many initiatives suggested by members either by giving money or providing time and work.

Our members often volunteer in the community and in our "Something to Shout About..." column, we try to acknowledge, celebrate, and support the accomplishments and endeavours of our members.



"In Memoriam" at the Spring Luncheon conducted by
Joan Berry and Joyce Barnes



Fall Luncheon Door Prize Winners



J.O.E. serving coffee and jokes at the Spring Luncheon

History of Our Minutes and Agendas

Agendas and minutes of Executive Meetings are a rich source of our history. Again, our records of our earliest meetings are sparse and if any of our senior members have copies of these we would be very grateful to have them for our archives and for future articles in our newsletters.

Several common themes occur frequently throughout our minutes and agendas: ways to recruit new members, ways to encourage members to attend our Spring and Fall luncheons, and ways to engage our members in RTO-ERO by planning interesting newsletters, activities and trips.

There are records of many interesting discussions and initiatives. The following is one of our favourite stories from an executive meeting.

Our executive of the day had just toured the newly opened Provincial office on Spadina Road and noted that the office had bare walls. They decided to do something about this. At the April 2000 meeting, presided over by President Isobel Muir, Larry Kelly made the following motion seconded by John Akin: "Moved that District 31 donate a picture to RTO-ERO headquarters that would be suitably inscribed - such picture should be a representation of Wellington County such as "Crossing the Speed" or a similar print to be decided at the September executive meeting and presented at the District general meeting in October". The motion carried.

In response, Ken MacKenzie submitted this report to the September meeting.

"As previously indicated, I shall not be in attendance at the Fall Executive Meeting, scheduled for September 11, 2000. Glo and I shall be cruising somewhere in the Mediterranean and hopefully enjoying our first visit ever "over the pond".

Further to directions given at the Spring Meeting, Mary Ann Hunt and I scoured various art galleries in the area, on August 25, 2000, to find a suitable "District 31 Memento" for the new offices at RTO Headquarters in Toronto. Enclosed are our findings by gallery.

Ken then listed 5 galleries and 6 possible choices with prices.

Arrangements have been made to have the prints or print advertisements available for perusal by the members of the Executive at the meeting.

Although not in attendance at the meeting, I would select "On the Way to School", since it has a rural flavour which is typical of Wellington County, which includes children,

the focus of our existence for many years; and more importantly, shows an aspect of education from the past and the present. To me, the print represents the "olde" and the "new" as does RTO-ERO.

Hopefully, the Executive will make a final decision to allow Paul Thompson and me to present the gift at the Fall Senate, where we will challenge other districts to follow suit."

Ultimately, the executive, with input from our members, decided to present the Provincial Office staff with the print "Crossing the Speed". This print hangs on the wall of the office on Spadina to this day.

*Retirement Planning
Workshop*

Tuesday, March 20, 2018

*Victoria Park East
Golf Club*

1096 Victoria Road South

Guelph

Registration: 5:30 pm

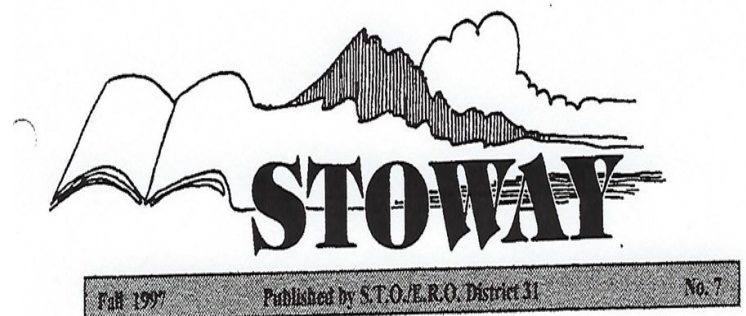
Workshop: 6-8 pm

Refreshments will be served.

carolchristie2@hotmail.com

for more information

*One of our Earliest
Newsletter Banners.*



Reflections of Past Presidents.

We asked our Past Presidents who were still with us and able to do so to please write a brief reflection of their favourite memories of being District 31 Presidents.

Doug Long President 1989-1990

I served a year as President Of District Thirty-One

I can't remember the details, but we had a lot of fun!

There were many, many challenges –tasks we dare not shirk

But our executive was willing, and we got right down to work.

As seems to happen often, we reviewed the Constitution

Then appeared before the Senate, seeking final resolution.

We also spent long hours, to revamp our own newsletter

Hoping that our efforts, would make its impact better.

We planned our local meetings, too, for both the Fall and Spring

Trusting that the work involved would a "good attendance" bring.

Against this backdrop, I've been asked my favourite memories to record

Which, of all the happenings provided best reward?

My favourite memories, my friends, are of the people that I've met

The camaraderie, the friendships, are as fine as one could get.

The handshakes and hugs exchanged – The warm words of each greeting

Are memories easily refreshed, at each new district meeting.

I look forward to future meetings – to friends, the food, the fun.

I'm glad I served as President, of District 31.

Gerry Barnhill 1990-1991

Gerry Barnhill wrote this article for the 1995 Newsletter and we thought it was a great memory to share.

A happy band of would-be golfers (WBG's) met at the Senjan Golf Course on Thursday, October 12 to take part in the first ever S.T.O. District 31 Golf Day.

The weather was gorgeous and while the numbers were low, our spirits were high. The group, Jess White, Jim Hunt, Tom Young, Fred Dack, Ted Monkhouse, Cathy Collins and Gerry Barnhill quickly decided the emphasis would be on participation and fun. Therefore, the following decisions were made:

- Score cards would not be used - i.e. No scores kept!

- No "winners" would be determined.

- The use of the "palm" iron and "foot" wedge would be permitted.

- Nine holes would be the limit of play.

With these stringent rules in mind, the first two participants immediately hit into the rough on their opening drives. This set the tone for the rest of the day.

It was agreed by all that the day had been successful and should be repeated next year with the hope that more WBG's would show up. As the group wended its way out of the parking lot to meet for lunch, the cry of "wait till next year" could be heard echoing across the fairways.

Bernard Kiely - 1992-1994

In the years 1992-93 and 93-94, I followed Jess White as president of RTO-ERO for District 31.

Over the years, my memory has dimmed regarding the many activities of the local unit. One activity which stands out for me is that we established workshops for potential new members, an activity urged on by the Provincial body.

I was very pleased with the initiative of the local executive and their support given to me.

Attendance at the provincial Senate meetings each year helped me to realize the strength and good organization of the provincial body - a group to be reckoned with at the provincial level regarding matters of impact on Teacher and Retired Teachers which can occur from time to time.

It is with a sense of joy and good fortune that I reflect on those years of being President of District 31.

I wish to note that RTO-ERO baseball enthusiasts received a "bonus" in 1992 and 1993 with the "Let's Go" Blue Jays winning two World Series!

Jim Hunt - 1994-1996

I had the privilege of being President of District 31 of S.T.O. for two years, from 1994 to 1996.

"S." T.O.? Many times, I was asked by the public what the "S" stood for. When I answered "Superannuated" I would draw a blank look and they were none the wiser. There is no question now! "R" means Retired and the change to R.T.O. in 1998 avoided any confusion.

I remember the STO senate meeting in Toronto in 1995 and the night of the Quebec referendum. When the results were announced on the hotel TV sets the STO members spontaneously stood up and sang "O Canada". I still get the chills when I think of that moment!

STO/RTO has grown so much over the years, thanks to the leadership in the district and the Toronto office. Changes and expansions in our Health Plan as well as services and activities which are now available are a result of the vision and energy in the district and head offices.

Both retired teachers and the teachers of today have benefited from the dedication and foresight of the RTO executive and members.

A special thank you from those who were in the STO ranks in 1994 to 1996.

Robert Paul - 2003 -2005

The first memory that comes to mind was how Paul Thompson, then President of District 31, refused to adjourn the annual meeting until some members volunteered to fill the vacancies on the district executive. I wanted to go home! I am so glad that I did join. At our meetings I got to work with such a great group of enthusiastic retired teachers, many of whom are still active on our executive. I particularly remember the efforts to get a district web page going, initiating the outings activity and organizing events for retiring teachers.

Probably a more significant memory for me from my many years on the executive was getting a better understanding and appreciation for the efforts of those who actively worked to develop and support RTO over the last 50 years. Through their efforts we have one of the best public service employee pensions in the world. I have seen the Ontario Teachers Plan described in the financial press as the "Yale" of pension plans. Our RTO medical insurance plan has certainly served its members well. I'm still a very satisfied customer after 30 years!

Marina Howlett - President - 2005-2008

As President of District 31, 2005-2008, I would like to share some of the highlights of my time on the executive and as President and pay tribute to District 31 Presidents - Isobel Muir, 1998-2000, and Ruth Scott, 2002-2003.

Isobel and Ruth are not well enough to share their own memories, but both remarkable women provided inspiration to me while on the executive.

Isobel Muir was one of the many RTO(STO) members to publicly support active teachers on the picket lines during the 1997 Provincial Political Protest. She was also instrumental in developing District 31's first constitution and the mentor who inspired me to join the District 31 Executive in 2000. Following her term as President, she served as District Treasurer from 2002-2006.

Prior to Ruth Scott's retirement in 1986, she served as Wellington North President for FWTAO, 1969-70, FWTAO Region Two Director, 1971-75, and an Executive member of the Wellington County Women Teachers' Association. These previous experiences served her well when she agreed to step into the President's role at the 2002 District Thirty-One Annual Meeting. Paul Thompson, the current President made an urgent appeal to the membership to find someone to assume the role as District President. Ruth Scott answered the call to serve as President in 2002-2003. The membership deeply appreciated her commitment and willingness to serve. Ruth was instrumental in persuading Lynn Morrison to return to the District 31 Executive as the Travel representative. District 31 is very fortunate to have members who have been willing to provide many years of voluntary service to our organization.

For some personal reflections of my Presidency, 2005-2008, I have chosen to include an excerpt from my President's message from the Spring 2008 newsletter to highlight RTO-ERO's Fortieth Anniversary celebration in 2008.

"This is RTO-ERO's fortieth anniversary (1968-2008)! Originally our name was STO-ERO, but the name was changed to RTO-ERO in 1999 to reflect the changes that occurred in our pension plan and to establish a clearer identity - "Retired Teachers". Prior to 1989, the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan was called the Superannuation Adjustment Fund - "Superannuated Teachers". It became clear during the 1997 Teachers' Provincial Protest and other community events that the public did not make the connection that Superannuated Teachers were Retired Teachers. Hence, the name change; we are the "Retired Teachers of Ontario".

Members of RTO-ERO can be especially proud and appreciative of the work RTO-ERO does on our behalf. Throughout our 40-year history, RTO-ERO has advocated for pension improvements, health insurance programs and other related educational, environment and social issues that affect retired teachers. RTO-ERO also encourages "Service to Others" locally and internationally.

Wellington District 31 has continued to enjoy wonderful support from the Wellington Catholic District School Board, the former Wellington County Board of Education and the Upper Grand District School Board. Currently our executive meetings are held in the Boardroom at Upper Grand. District 31 continues to be well served by a number of dedicated retired teachers who have served on our executive since 1981."

We celebrated our Fortieth Anniversary on Wednesday, May 2, 2008 at the Victoria Park East Golf Club, Guelph Ontario. Many of our Past Presidents came to join the celebration. We were honoured to have Emery Nelson and his daughter, Margaret Youngblood, who is also an RTO-ERO member in attendance. It was an honour and a privilege to welcome and pay tribute to District Thirty-One's first President!

Stephen O'Connell - President - 2008- 2011

Serving as President of District 31 for three years was rewarding. It presented me with many opportunities to gain a better insight and appreciation of the work accomplished on our behalf. I enjoyed representing Wellington at the Senate and District meetings. New friendships were begun as I worked with retired local educators, district presidents and provincial office staff. As one door closed, another opened. I was appointed to the Member Services Committee. This gave me another way to serve our membership. It is hard to believe that I have worked with RTO-ERO for thirteen years.

Brenda McGinnis - President - 2011 - 2015

Among the many happy memories I have of being President of District 31, one of my favourites is that of our "packing bees". In an attempt to save money and distribute our newsletter in a timely fashion (two never ending objectives!), the executive used to meet at our house and over coffee and snacks we would fold the newsletters and pack them into envelopes which we would label and stamp. We would then load the boxes into Mike Curtis' car and he would drive them to the post office. While working away on our assembly lines, we would tell stories and laugh and get to know each other better. We developed some of our best ideas for trips and luncheons and initiatives. Best of all, we became good friends. We have since found new ways of saving money on the distribution of the newsletter and, while we miss those sociable little sessions, we still have a lot of fun planning and participating in our trips, luncheons and workshops. We always welcome members to join us and participate in our wonderful organization which not only provides outstanding health coverage and excellent representation on the pension board and in the political realm but also encourages friendship and adventures.



Hi Folks,

We have an exciting season of trips for you on our anniversary year. In the Spring and Summer we have two dates to see the award winning show Come From Away. The May 26th one is full but there are still seats available for the July 14th show. The price is \$205 per person and includes a good orchestra seat, a meal and transportation. Pickups will be 8.00 am in Mount Forest: 8.30 in Arthur: 9.00 in Fergus, and 9.15 in Guelph. If July 14th does not suit, you could be on a stand-by list for

May.

In the fall we have the South Simcoe Railway trip on September 30th with a meal at Mrs. Mitchells and time for Christmas shopping at Granny Taught Us How, a very unique gift shop. It will be about \$95 to be decided for sure when the railway sets its 2018 prices. Then on October 24th we make a Hallowe'en visit to Haunted Toronto. A step-on guide gives us all the scary facts about the haunted side of Toronto. It is followed by a meal at the Hot House Restaurant and a visit to the historic Saint Lawrence Market. This is \$90 per person. Last is our New York City tour October 15 - 19th. It includes a guided city tour, a dinner cruise, the 9/11 Memorial and Museum, a Broadway show TBA, and other attractions. It starts at \$1515 per person twin. For this tour contact Great Canadian Holidays directly at 1-800-461-8687. For the day trips, book with me at 813-780-8083 until April 15th,

then 519-323-2419 or by email at lynnmorrison@wightman.ca. Join us for some fun and adventure this special year!
Lynn



Lynn, at the Fall Luncheon, talking to a prospective traveller

RTO District 31

c/o Mike Curtis (Treasurer)

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Erin, ON



History of Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan

A Historical Perspective on the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan - by Marina Howlett

1917 A Teachers' Pension Plan established for 14,000 members - 40 years service required for an un-reduced pension. Maximum pension \$1,000 per year.

1949 Disability Pensions and Survivor Pensions now became available. Maximum pension \$3,000 per year.

1954 Pension calculation based on average of last 10 years of teaching rather than a career average.

1966 Canada Pension Plan introduced to provide a solid, stable base for future retirees.

Teachers, public service employees and civil servants were required to participate. Teachers current contribution rate was 6% to the teachers' pension plan (called the Superannuation Fund). This contribution was split 4.2% to Teachers' Superannuation Fund and 1.8% to Canada Pension Plan. Pension contributions and benefits integrated. The CPP offset changed the way a teacher received his/her pension entitlement. Teachers now receive their pension income from two sources - Teachers' Pension Plan and Canada Pension Plan. Pensions based on best 7 years' average salary.

1971 90 Factor Introduced: And survivor Pension benefits improved.

1976 Annual inflation adjustments introduced (cost of living adjustments made in January of each year).

1979 Superannuation Adjustment Fund introduced. Teachers contributed an additional 1% of their earnings to pay for yearly cost of living adjustments.

1984 Contribution rate increase. Teachers were required to contribute 6.9% to the pension fund.

Pension based on best 5 years of annual salary. Credit and salary annualized (major improvement that benefited part-time Teachers, especially women). Improvements were made to survivor pensions.

During the 1980's, opportunities were provided for Teachers to pay back pension contributions which had been withdrawn at an earlier date. Women were able to buy back credit for maternity leaves.

1990 Milestone Year - Partnership Established.

Name Change - Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan formerly the Teachers' Superannuation Fund.

Prior to 1990 the pension plan had been government sponsored and controlled. The Partnership Agreement established the Ontario Government and the Ontario Teachers' Federation as co-sponsors. The partners shared the joint responsibility to fund the pension shortfall (deficit) or to spend the surplus (pension improvements).

Contribution Rate increased to 8.9%

(additional 1% Superannuation Adjustment Fund introduced in 1979 now rolled into the contribution rate)

1998 85 Factor introduced as a temporary benefit. Adjustments made to reduce the Canada Pension offset. Retired Teachers and future retirees would have their Teacher's pension reduced by a lesser amount (CPP offset) at age 65.

Survivor pensions provided to same-sex partners

2001 85 Factor became a permanent benefit. Further adjustments made to reduce CPP offset. Reduced pensions available at age 50. 10 Year Pension Guarantee for all members.

2005-2006

The Partners, Ontario Government and Ontario Teachers' Federation must determine ways to deal with the deficit and find a solution to the funding deficiency. In previous years, surplus funds provided benefit improvements. A deficit required additional contributions from the government and the Teachers. OTF would work with the government to minimize the impact these changes would have on Teachers. The partners were required by law to find a solution to the current deficit (shortfall).

2007 The partners agreed to increase the contribution rate by 2% for teachers and the government, to address the funding shortfall. Pension benefits for all teachers were maintained at the current level.

2008 The Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan was ranked #1 for member services among fifty-eight international pension plans.

2008 The Partners (OTF and the government) introduced Conditional Inflation Protection for pension benefits earned after 2009. The basic contribution rate was increased from 8% to 9% for the employer and the employees.

2010 Members who retired prior to January 1, 2010 would continue to receive 100% cost of living inflation protection. Members who retired after 2009 would be subject to Conditional Inflation Protection for pension benefits determined by this current funding valuation. Cost of living increases may range from 50-100%.

2012 Effective January 1, 2012, all employees and employers must contribute an additional 1.1% which will be phased in over three years. Teachers who retired after 2009 would receive a slightly smaller amount of cost of living increases.

Teachers who retired prior to 2009 will continue to receive full cost of living increases.

2012 Effective September 2012, all retired teachers would be eligible to be re-employed in education for fifty days. The previous 95/20-day rule for re-employment was retired.

The fifty-day rule applied to all retired teachers irrespective of the date of retirement.

2012 OTTP attained global distinction in 2007, 2010, 2011, and 2012 for being among the best managed plans. OTTP is the third largest pension plan in Canada and ranked in the top twelve pension plans in North America.

2015 Because of the 6.8 billion pension surplus in the 2014 pension filing, OTTP used a portion of this surplus to partially restore inflation protection for teachers who retired after 2009. Effective January 1, 2016, pension credit earned after 2009 received 70% of the conditional inflation protection adjustment.

2017 In March 2017, The Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan reported its fourth surplus (11.5 billion) in a decade. The Funding Valuation showed the OTTP to be 105% funded at the beginning of 2017. Pensioners who retired after 2009 would see their pensions funded at 100% (increased from 90%) of the cost of living adjustment based on the Consumer Price Index.

2018 Effective January 1, 2018, full restoration of the Inflation Protection for teachers who retired after 2009 will be restored. The contribution rate for the Plan's active members will be reduced by 1.1%

Notes from OTF Communique June 12, 2017

"Conditional inflation protection has proven to be an effective tool for managing Plan deficits and now, for the fourth year in a row, the sponsors will use some of the surplus to finish the restoration of indexing that pensioners lost in recent years," said OTF President Mike Foulds. "In addition, the Plan's active members will enjoy a 1.1% reduction in the contribution rate. The remainder of the surplus will be kept in reserve to provide benefit and contribution rate stability against future funding challenges such as low interest rates and increasing longevity, both of which increase the Plan's liabilities."

Pensioners who retired after 2009 will receive a one-time increase in January 2018 to restore their pensions to the levels they would have been at, had full inflation protection been provided each year since they retired. They will

also receive a slightly higher inflation increase next year for the portion of their pensions earned after 2009. Cost-of-living increases for this portion of pension credit will equal 100% of the annual increase in the Consumer Price Index (CPI), up from the current level of 90%. Pension credits earned before 2010 remain fully inflation - protected.

OTTP members (active and retired) are reminded that Pension Benefits already earned are protected by federal and provincial legislation.

Special Request

Missing District Newsletters from 1995-2000

Executive Meeting Records from 1981 to 2000

If you have any information, newsletters or records from these dates and are willing to share these with RTO-ERO, District 31, please contact :

Brenda McGinnis at

519-824-5263

dmcgic602@rogers.com

Marina Howlett at

519-836-8585

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We would be pleased to put this material in our archival records. THANK YOU!