

STONY BRIDGES

A NEWSLETTER FOR RTO/ERO DISTRICT 23, NORTH YORK

Issue number 77

September 2003

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

ANDREE NOTTAGE

This past year has been a busy, and rewarding year!. I have been very fortunate to have the opportunity to work with dedicated people who serve as your Executive Committee members. They are enthusiastic, creative, and always ready to undertake the many tasks at hand. A very big thank you to them!

It has been an honour to serve as President of District #23, in 2002-03. My thanks to you, the members of District #23, for your participation in the events and activities that the Executive Committee has provided for you throughout the past year.

ACTIVITIES 2002-2003

Honouring Kathleen Elliott at the May SPRING LUNCHEON was a wonderful occasion. Kathleen has been a volunteer on the North York RTO Executive, for the past 25 years. Always gracious, and

~ See *PRESIDENT*/page 3

COMING EVENTS

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Tuesday, September 9
~ page 28

CHAMPAGNE BREAKFAST

Tuesday, September 23
~ page 28

SPEAKER

Tuesday, October 21
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STRATFORD

Wednesday September 17
GRAND RIVER TOUR

Thursday, September 25
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ELGIN THEATRE

Wednesday, October 1
~ page 24

WOODBINE

Thursday, October 30
~ page 24

MUSEUM TOUR

Thursday, November 13
~ page 25

NIAGARA CASINO

Wednesday, December 3
~ page 26

CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON

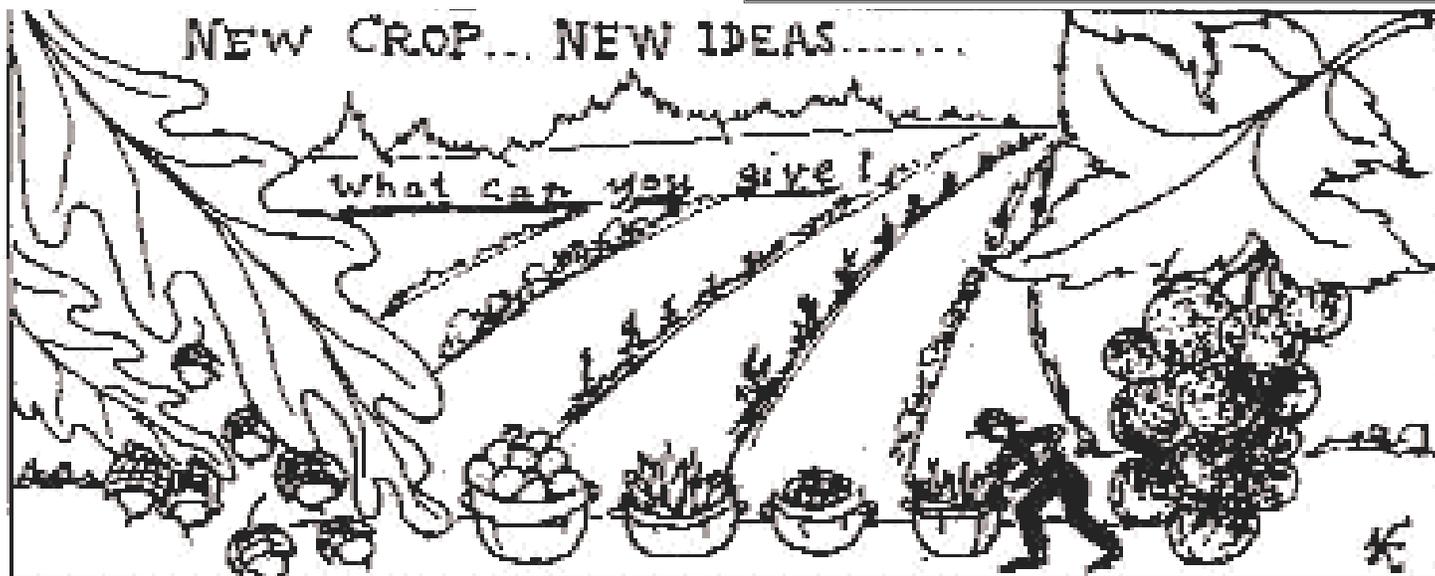
Friday, December 5
~ page 30

BRIDGE

Tuesdays: September 2, 16, 23, 30, October 14, 28, November 11, 18, 25, December 9, 16, 23

TRAVELOGUES

Tuesdays: October 7, November 4, December 2
~ page 9



Stony Bridges welcomes submissions from members. Please include name, address and telephone number (for identification only) and some past and present biographical information (for publication) Pictures are also welcome. We reserve the right to edit, condense or reject letters or submissions. Send them to:

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No Newsletter?

If you are a member of RTO/ERO, District 23 North York or any other RTO/ERO District, call George Meek at 416-226-3568.

If you are not a member of RTO/ERO, then you will need to join to receive a newsletter. Call RTO/ERO provincial office at 416-962-9463, then call George Meek.

Change of Address

Please use the form found on the end page of this newsletter to notify us of your new address.

Deadline

The deadline for the next issue is Nov. 12, 2003

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Calendar of Events

September

2	Bridge	1:00
3	Exec. meeting	9:15 a.m.
9	AGM	10:30 a.m.
16	Bridge	1:00
17	Stratford	9:00 a.m.
23	Champagne	9:30 a.m.
23	Bridge	1:00
25	Grand River Tour	9:00 a.m.
30	Bridge	1:00

October

1	Elgin Theatre	9:45 a.m.
7	Travelogue	1:30
8	Executive Meeting	9:15 a.m.
14	Bridge	1:00
21	Speaker Lunch	11:30 a.m.
28	Bridge	1:00
30	Woodbine	12:00 noon

November

4	Travelogue	1:30
11	Bridge	1:00
12	Executive meeting	9:15 a.m.
13	Museum walking tour	10:00 a.m.
18	Bridge	1:00
25	Bridge	1:00

December

2	Travelogue	1:30
3	Niagara Casino	8:15 a.m.
5	Christmas Luncheon	11:00 a.m.
9	Bridge	1:00
10	Executive meeting	9:15 a.m.
16	Bridge	1:00
23	Bridge	1:00

~ PRESIDENT

Continued from Page 1

willing to assist in any way, Kathleen is our archivist, assistant treasurer, and was, until recently, the official photographer. As you can see, she is a tremendous asset to our District.

At the luncheon, several colleagues shared memories, and Marguerite Agnew regaled us with a poem she composed for Kathleen. (Look for it in this edition of Stony). A certificate of appreciation was presented on behalf of the RTO/ERO Provincial Executive, as well as a letter of congratulations from President Mickey Contini. Thank you Kathleen.

SOME CHANGES

Excellent presentations were enjoyed at the six sessions of the SPEAKER'S BUREAU. In the hopes of improving the attendance, we are offering a new format. There will be three speakers in the coming year, and each session will include a luncheon. Be sure to note our new program, as advertised, and sign up.

The TRAVEL Convenors have been extremely busy organizing ever more interesting outings for you. By increasing the number and the variety of the outings, we hope that a very successful program will become even more so.

Our special LUNCHEONS will continue to be offered by the Social Convenor, as they are enjoyed by so many of you.

Special invitation to NEW RETIREES and RTO members to attend the CHAMPAGNE BREAKFAST on September 23. It promises to be fun.

The ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING on September 9 will include a speaker and a luncheon. By attending this event you will

become aware of the very full scope of the activities undertaken by your Executive. Watch for the ads!

OTHER CHANGES

As of this year, we will be publishing a fourth edition of STONY BRIDGES. This additional edition, slated for June, will permit us to bring you more timely information about the early fall events. Thanks to our Editor for doing such a fine job!

We have realigned our FISCAL YEAR to match the calendar year and at the same time be in line with the Provincial RTO/ERO fiscal year. Our Treasurer has streamlined our budget, and has added an external audit of our accounts. Looking after the treasury is an important task and we are grateful for our Treasurer and Assistant Treasurers.

TDSB DISTRICT COUNCIL

We continue to share ideas and tasks with our Colleagues from the three other Districts in Toronto. In view of the pending election, (as I write) the members of the local Political Action Committees have been busily engaged in election preparedness. Included in their tasks is the distribution of a generic ELECTION POSTER created by RTO/ERO.

If you are able to help in the distribution of the posters in the North York area, please call George Meek at 416 - 226 - 3568.

We are well on our way to creating a common WEB SITE which will contain information for members of Toronto Districts, and specific information from each of the four areas. You can access it now at www.rtoerotorontodistricts.org. Have a look!

We are monitoring the nego-

tiations of the collective agreement at TDSB, regarding RETIREE BENEFITS. It appears that retirees under the age of 65, who are currently receiving their benefits from TDSB, will continue to receive benefits under the same circumstances under which they retired (they are "grandfathered") and premiums will be the same as those paid to cover teaching employees. However, there may be some changes for some new retirees.

The RTO/ERO SENATE, SPRING '03, was attended by Beverley Wood, Past President, and myself as Senators. David Fleming, 1st Vice President., and Nora Garvin from our Political Action Committee attended as Observers. Of special note was a motion passed in support of the RIGHT TO STRIKE for teachers. For a full account of Senate activities please refer to the Summer 2003 edition of RTO/ERO *Renaissance* magazine

In closing, I wish to express sincere thanks to David Fleming for his generous assistance during the past year, and wish him the very best as he undertakes the Presidency of District #23 at the September 9, Annual General Meeting.

To all of you, best wishes for health and joy.

Andree Nottage, President.





RTO/ERO POSITION PAPERS: PROVINCIAL POLITICS:

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Long Term Health Care/ page 5

Safeguards for Seniors/page 5

Health Care/page 6

ALSO - Results of member survey/page 7

EDUCATION

Funding

RTO/ERO believes that the Provincial Government must provide sufficient funding for all components of the funding formula. The benchmark costs used in calculating these funds must be updated to reflect the current costs of providing education. Providing a multi-year formula will enable school boards to develop more effective long range plans. Reform in the funding of education must make use of the comprehensive recommendations in the Rozanski Report of December 2002, including provision for the Double Cohort in September 2003.

Stability

RTO/ERO believes that well-funded, public education systems provide the best opportunity for a quality education for all citizens in Ontario. New curriculum implementation needs to be well planned and sufficient resources must be

provided to facilitate the changes. Textbooks and teacher in-service are vital for implementation to be successful. Ontario needs a period of education stability in order to allow the plethora of recent reforms to take shape in a structured manner. In order for school boards to be more accountable to their communities, they must have sufficient decision-making authority to represent local needs and interests.

Respect

RTO/ERO believes that there must be respect for teachers, administrators and school boards. In our view, those directly responsible for educating students have been under siege from a variety of quarters. The recertification process has created much turmoil among teachers, making them feel undervalued and even more demoralized. We oppose the provincial testing of students and recertification of teachers in their current formats.

RTO/ERO Policies

RTO/ERO, as an organization of 50,000 retired teachers, retains an avid interest in what is happening in the classrooms and schools in this province. We have policy statements that support publicly-funded education, active teachers, OTF and the Affiliates. We also believe that the first criterion for school closures must be the total welfare of students.

Possible Questions for Candidates

1. How will your party use the recommendations in the Rozanski Report to improve the funding of education?
2. How will your party foster stability in the education sector?
3. What will your party do to re-establish respect in the education sector?
4. What will you do to prevent the demise of small schools in single-school communities?

ENERGY

Public Ownership/Deregulation

RTO/ERO believes that the Ontario electricity market must remain in public hands. In deregulated jurisdictions, the costs of electricity have skyrocketed and the reliability of supply has suffered. Selling the distribution and/or transmission of electricity will not benefit con-

sumers in the long run.

We feel the public sector should be responsible for the security of Ontario's power supply. Electricity is one of the province's most valuable assets and thus should never be allowed to slip into private hands.

RTO/ERO is opposed to further deregulation of Ontario's electrical energy supply. Our economy requires a reliable, affordable supply

of power to compete internationally. Families and businesses also need stability to make future plans. Rates must be kept stable and there must be a variety of available sources of power.

The long term debt needs to be addressed in order to ensure that future ratepayers are not

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unduly burdened. We would like to see a broad-based consumer protection plan with an appointed commission to oversee the electrical market. A renewed electricity marketplace must have a strong regulatory environment in order to protect consumers, big and small.

Environment

Coal-fired generating plants

are the single largest source of pollution in Ontario and need to be phased out at the earliest opportunity. Money should be invested in the development of renewable electricity generators, and other "clean" alternatives. RTO/ERO sees the current debate about energy as an excellent opportunity for governments to develop creative long term solutions that are in the best interests of all Ontarians.

Possible Questions

1. How will your party provide consumers with reliable, affordable power?
2. What steps would your party take to provide a strong regulatory environment to protect consumers?
3. What clean alternatives do you propose to eliminate coal-fired generating plants?

LONG TERM CARE & HOME CARE

Long Term Care

RTO/ERO believes that the lack of a public strategy to address the funding and delivery of long-term health care services is a major concern for seniors and our membership. The current funding shortfall has resulted in fewer of the proposed new beds for long term care, and less progress made on the promised redevelopment of the province's 16,000 substandard beds.

The Community Care

Access Centres (CCAC's) are attempting to address the concerns and frustrations of the elderly and their families. However, the lack of referrals to CCAC's and scarce long term care accommodations continue to exacerbate the situation.

RTO/ERO also believes that the funding shortfall has lowered standards for patient care in long term care facilities, with residents receiving less than optimal personal care. Salaries of caregivers remain unreasonably low, resulting in a

rapid turnover of skilled personnel. Certification standards for a majority of paid caregivers are also non-existent. RTO/ERO participated in a successful lobby to stop the proposed exorbitant 15% increase in the cost to seniors residing in long-term care facilities, but this was only a "stop gap" measure, as the increase was spread over three years. Fee increases are making the cost of care unaffordable to thousands of seniors, many of whom live on low fixed incomes.

Home Care

The Romanow Report makes no mention of a long term strategy to assist seniors wishing to remain in their own homes for as long as possible. Funding policies continue to favour Long Term Care facilities over community and home care services. The imposition of caps on home care funding and legislated limits on the number of hours of care have imposed hardships on many seniors, thus reducing their quality of life and causing concern for their safety.

RTO/ERO believes that

increased federal and provincial funding must be directed toward the needs of those in long term care facilities and those who wish to remain in their own homes. A long term strategy to deal with both funding and services for seniors is essential for the future delivery of health care in Ontario.

Possible Questions for Candidates

1. How will your party deal with the critical need for more and improved long term care beds across Ontario?
2. What plans does your party have to improve working conditions and compensation of workers in long-term care facilities, to guarantee residents a standard of care that maintains their dignity and comfort?
3. How will your party improve home care services so that more seniors will be able to live independently in their own homes?

SAFEGUARDS FOR SENIORS

Introduction

Seniors are the fastest grow-

ing segment of the population and represent a significant political force. Seniors are interested in the political process and have a

history of voting in greater numbers than other age groups. RTO/ERO

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sees as one of its roles the advocacy of issues which are specific to the needs of retirees/seniors.

Abuse

The incidence of abuse of seniors in public institutions, and private care facilities and family home settings is greater than anyone would care to admit or as reported. Seniors often feel compelled to conceal abuse or neglect by staff or family members, for fear of reprisals or increased isolation. Too many seniors do not know who to turn to for help. Society as a whole and governments in particular must openly acknowledge this terrible phenomenon, develop awareness programs and implement concrete strategies to protect seniors from abuse of any kind.

Personal Wellness

As seniors age, health problems increase regardless of where they reside. This can have a debilitating effect on seniors – emotionally, as well as physically. Lack of confidence, loss of self respect, loneliness, isolation, are contributing factors in the decline of personal care and cleanliness. The standard of care in public institutions and private facilities varies widely, and too often contributes to the premature decline of individual faculties. There is a collective obligation to ensure not just adequate, but appropriate programs and services for seniors' wellness i.e. public transportation, social activities, preventative health strategies.

Finances

Too many seniors live at or below the poverty line. While this may not be the case for most retired teachers, there are those with small pensions and limited government supports. The "golden years" should not be fraught with con-

cerns about "making ends meet" by having to make unhealthy choices. Society must also protect the elderly from scams and frauds through prevention and education, with a justice system that levies sentences that will deter financial abuse.

Possible Questions

1. What concrete measures will your party commit to in order to combat elder abuse?

2. How will your government promote practical wellness programs for seniors?

3. How will your party ensure that seniors have adequate finances and the necessary protections to allow them to live their lives with dignity?

HEALTH CARE

Reform and Renewal

RTO/ERO believes it is imperative that the federal and provincial governments work together to ensure that health care renewal proceeds in a timely fashion. Significant additional public funding, without the need to raise taxes or implement user fees, is required in both the short and longer term. Health care reform must utilize the recommendations for change in the Romanow and Kirby Reports to bring about measurable and sustained progress. RTO/ERO is opposed to using the increases in funding to expand "for profit" health care delivery.

Access and Equity

RTO/ERO's submission to the Romanow Commission placed great emphasis on the need for improved access to medical services in rural and remote areas. In a recent letter to the provincial Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, RTO/ERO also expressed concern that seniors from the north and elsewhere are financially penalized by inadequate health travel subsidies.

Affordability and Support

RTO/ERO, as a health care provider, monitors drug costs and Plans like the Trillium and Ontario Drug Benefits. We strongly support the concept of catastrophic drug expense protection. RTO/ERO also believes that Home Care supports should be expanded to include seniors who want to remain in their own homes.

Prevention and Wellness

RTO/ERO has long advocated the promotion of good health through regular physical activity, and supported preventative strategies to reduce illness and injury. We endorse both the Romanow and Kirby Reports in calling for the integration of wellness and prevention as part of primary health care reforms. A concerted effort by governments will not only reduce health care costs, but will result in healthier Canadians of all ages.

Possible Questions

1. How will your party use additional Federal funding to renew Health Care in Ontario?

2. How will your party ensure

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access and equity for all Ontarions?

3. Where does your party stand on drug costs for seniors?

4. To what extent would your party promote and fund wellness and prevention strategies?

NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY

by Beverley Woods

In the Spring of 2002, the Toronto Districts of RTO/ERO distributed a Needs Assessment Survey to all members. As the title suggests, the purpose of this survey was to find out how the needs of members could best be met. Thank you to District 23 RTO/ERO members who responded to the survey. North York had the highest percentage of returns. Your responses have and will assist your Executive to plan programs and activities that are relevant, interesting, and fun.

There were four sections to the survey:

a) Personal Information to obtain a feel for the individual circumstances related to age, time /location /possible fees of workshops and personal comments.

b) Topics of interest for members to indicate workshop priorities, discover internal Special Interest Groups (SIG"s), and seek potential volunteer leaders for such workshop.

c) Involvement Inquiry to find the level of participation of individuals

in their District, give those wishing to become more involved an opportunity to volunteer, and develop an awareness of individual attitudes to current matters related to services / fees, honoraria, and Internet access; **d) Current Attitudes** to identify current attitudes to specific issues within RTO/ERO, related to broadened membership opportunities, health card implementation, and length of vacation outside Ontario.

To repeat, all responses to survey questions would involve considerable space, so please accept the following comments as representative of participants' suggestions:

a) Personal Information

Workshop location suggestions included 5050 Yonge Street, Civic Garden Centre, Moonlight Ballroom, Travelodge, and Holiday Inn hotels. April, May, and October were the favoured months. Tuesday and Wednesday were the preferred days, and the morning for time were identified. With respect to workshop planning, keeping costs down and easy accessibility were recommended.

b) Topics of Interest

Finances

Bestowing treasures to relatives, investments, capital gains/pitfalls were popular topics, followed by pension, RRSP/RIP, and estate planning.

Health - RTO/ERO benefits, travel and health, and alternative medicines were favoured along with caregiving, nutrition and exercise.

Legal - Wills, probate, powers of

attorney, personal liability, and travel issues ranked high.

Political - The health care system, assisting active teachers. Municipal, Provincial, and environmental issues were identified as major concerns.

Social - Stratford, Shaw, and Toronto theatre productions as well as day excursions and visits to the AGO, ROM, Ontario Science Centre, and the McMichael Gallery were highly recommended. Volunteer opportunities, movie/book clubs, computer training, continuing education sessions, digital cameras, and a writers' club were also of interest.

c) Special Interest Groups

Suggested as possible topics for interest groups were: French, hiking, theatre, opera, dining, computers, and photography. Thanks to those members who volunteered to a lead a group.

d) Internet Access

Most survey respondents would like an RTO/ERO District 23 Internet communications service.

Thanks again to members who completed and returned the Needs Assessment Survey. Your comments and recommendations have been examined by your District RTO/ERO Executive, and some action has already occurred. Please see programs and activities mentioned in this and future issues of *Stony Bridges*.

For further information, please contact Beverley Wood at 905-727-5830

or beverley@aci.on.ca.

SPEAKERS' BUREAU

by
David Fleming

During the past year, your Executive, through the Speakers' Bureau Committee, has provided a series of five speakers on Thursdays, at Willowdale United Church, two in the fall of 2002 and three in the spring of 2003. The calibre of the speakers has been excellent.

In April, Dr. John Smith, the husband of one of our Executive members, Penny McLeod-Smith, gave us an illustrated talk on the new state-of-the-art equipment at the Hospital for Sick Children, here in Toronto. Much of the equipment is used to study the maladies of children, but is equally as useful in the diagnosis of serious medical problems in adults. Those of us present found the information very

enlightening.

James Kennedy, a prominent lawyer, spoke on the topic "Wills and Estates", on May 15th. All present benefitted from Mr. Kennedy's most thorough discussion on the need to prepare wills, preferably by an attorney, and how to manage and settle estates if called upon to be a trustee of an estate. For many of us this advice was timely and very useful.

The Speakers' Bureau was a new endeavour for your Executive. We were delighted with the speakers who participated, but attendance by RTO - NY members was generally disappointing.

Next year we are going to

change the format; we are offering two luncheons with speakers. The first event will be at the Moonlight Ballroom on Tuesday, October 21, at a cost of \$20.00. Our guest speaker, Mr. Doug Tallon, a member of our Executive, will speak on the topic "Inexpensive Entertainment in Toronto". Next April 20, 2004, we hope to have a speaker from the Garden Club of Toronto. The cost for each of these luncheons will be \$20.00. If you are interested in attending the luncheon on October 21, please complete the tear-off below and send your cheque to Mr. Peter Lynch prior to September 30.



Penny McLeod-Smith, membership convener (left) and husband Dr. John Smith, the featured speaker on April 17, 2003.

I wish to attend the Speaker - Luncheon, at the Moonlight Ballroom (11:30 - 1:30 p.m.) on October 21, 2003.

"Inexpensive Entertainment in Toronto" with Doug Tallon

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Make cheque for \$20.00 payable to RTO/ERO District 23 and mail to:

Peter Lynch
135 Church Street,
Weston, Ontario
M9N 1N6

TRAVELOGUES

Travelogues occur on the first Tuesday of each month in the auditorium of Willowdale United Church on Kenneth Avenue.

Admission is \$2.00 and includes refreshments and entry into a lucky draw.

Thanks for all the travelogue leads this year. Please keep them coming. Call me at 905 - 895 - 4753.

In the fall, we will be travelling with Suzanne, Andree and Bill to Africa, South America and Europe. Please join us.

Kerry Peters, Convenor



Frequent presenter, Gloria Broks during her presentation, 'Toronto's Musical Gardens'.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2003

1.30 p.m.

Egypt and a Nile River Cruise

with

Suzanne Southon (from London)

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2003

1.30 p.m.

Amazon, Galapagos and the Andes

with

Past President Andree Nottage

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2003

1.30 p.m.

Castles and Tombs of Ireland

with

*Bill Wakeham
(previous Turkey presenter)*

SPRING LUNCHEON 2002

A Salmon/Strawberry Event



Nina Hillier and Mildred Frank at the Luncheon.



Kathleen Elliott, the guest of honour, (right) talking to Fran Sumner at the Spring Luncheon.



The annual spring luncheon, held at the Thornhill Golf and Country Club on May 7, was an extraordinary event. The weather cooperated, the food was delicious, conversation sparkled. Door prizes were distributed amidst a lot of laughter. Indeed, a good time was had by all.

Kathleen Elliott was the guest of honour. Kathleen, who has served our organization for years, is much loved. Tributes were given by Aileen Thomas, Beverley Wood, Nancy Walsh, David Fleming and Marguerite Agnew.

KATHLEEN

by Marguerite Agnew

Kathleen's been historian of this happy grouping STONYcal,
And she's kept most faithful records in those albums photographical,

You really should review them all with observations critical
To appreciate her standards and her notes exactitudinal.

She's kept our picture albums with some photographs historical,
Of events that meant so much to us, both formal and some personal;

Recording names so accurately, her ways are so methodical,
To fill her shoes will take some one, or persons quite exceptional.

She's especially particular in arrangements perpendicular,
And groupings horizontal with their information vertical.
She's kept the notes historical, so very informational,
And her efforts secretarial deal with matters episodal.

She decorates our bulletins with sketches so artistical.
She's painted all those lovely mugs we give at times occasional;
They've treated travelogicians and speakers grave and humourous.
We give these mugs so happily at times, but now so numerous.

She's great at all things social, and at bridge she's quite fanatical.
She takes our cash at most events, with talents mathematical.
She always knows what's going on. She's always so dependable,
Whoever takes her place will need this flare that's so commendable.

She's very fond of butterflies, and things ornithological.
The birdbath in her yard requires re-fillings quite continual.
She's also fond of music, goes to concerts philharmonical,
And goes to church to involve herself in matters theological.

Her garden is extensive and she's wise in things botanical.
Her carrots, beets and squashes and tomatoes are quite magical.
Her flowers are most prolific and she cuts them for her table,
And she tackles tasks astonishing when she is fit and able.

Her lovely home is filled with art and treasures strange and whimsical,
Which remind her of her travels north and southern hemispherical,
Her lovely paintings can be found in places exhibitional,
But some she keeps to grace her walls, the ones with matters meaningful.

She climbed THE WALL in China with equipment photographical,
And from the top she took some snaps which really are exceptional.
But coming down she slipped and fell, a tumble catastrophical.
She smashed herself, but saved her precious cameras irreplaceable.

Her journey home was terrible, a nightmare diabolical.
Her doctors still have not removed her miseries anatomical.
So Kathleen takes a daily dose of products pharmaceutical,
To ease the pains that still remain and seem to be perpetual.

She's held in high regard in raising funds for matters clerical.
She's also helped create some stoles for her church's bi-centennial.
She's foremost in design, producing objects antependial.
Her talents and abilities make lengthy lists compendial.

In her church a book records the benefactors generous
Who've given cash to build, in glass, a lovely window luminous.
So Kathleen's writing in these names in lettering calligraphical,
To hold in perpetuity these donors, ever memorable.

Her forward thinking leads her to the Thornhill Villages Festival,
To which her church is working on a concept hypothetical.
Now Kathleen has to turn these thoughts to something realistical
And produce a float with folks aboard majestic and fantastical.

Marguerite Agnew retired from R.J. Lang Junior High School where she worked with Kathleen many years ago.



Kathleen (second from the right) at the Luncheon with family members (left to right) Susanne E. Catherine Gallagher, Bob E., Kathleen, Rick Elliott.



ADVENTURES IN WRITING by Gabrielle Wills

"Needs more sex and violence," a Toronto literary agent said of the first draft of my "epic tale of pioneer Canada", *A Place To Call Home*. That was in 1980.

It had all started a few years earlier, when I, a young psychology/sociology grad, found myself teaching history. Even I thought the old textbooks a bit bland, and so I tried to spice things up with some social history. With... well, a bit of sex. And though the students were fascinated by Victorian morality, some parents complained about my discussing sexy pianos legs disguised with bloomers. But it emphasized that history was more than wars and famous people doing grand things. It was also how ordinary people lived and interacted.

An avid reader of historical fiction, I realized that there was no better way to give people a true sense of the past than to immerse them in a rousing good yarn set in an accurate re-creation of some time period.

So began the long journey of *A Place To Call Home*.

From food and medicine to clothes and architecture, I learned about – and marvelled at – pioneer life. I'm sure I amused friends with my endless litany of fascinating facts

that I unearthed in my research, which included wandering through "living" museums, such as Upper Canada Village, digging through primary sources in archives, and studying more than 150 books – diaries, biographies, sociological analyzes, and scholarly tomes.

I discovered that my home town of Lindsay, Ontario had an intriguing past. Riots at the mill, a devastating epidemic, an invasion of Orangemen, and the "great" fire of 1861 were just some of the real events that I wanted to bring to life.

Characters grew easily in my imagination, and represent the wide variety of people who settled in Upper Canada. They soon took over the story, leading the narrative down paths that I hadn't anticipated, and making writing itself a wonderful adventure.

A year later I had a book. My next task was to sell it to a publisher.... I could write a treatise on rejection. And write I did, but about more interesting topics. New stories were waiting to be told, and 23 years later, in addition to raising a daughter, supply teaching, and starting a website design business, I've written 2 1/2 more novels, 2 novel outlines, 2 children's picture books, and several short stories. One of these was included in the **Winner's Circle 5 Anthology** in 1997.

A Place To Call Home went through many revisions, once under

IDEAS AND ENTERTAINMENTS

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the guidance of my former literary agent in England. We had several "near misses" with some prestigious British publishing houses, and an eminent Canadian publisher told me that I had written "two very good books".

That encouraged me to publish the novel myself. Now that I have 3000 beautifully printed books in the basement, my challenge is to get them into the hands of readers.

A Place To Call Home is finally reaching an audience. In the three weeks that this book has been available, it has already garnered enthusiastic praise from readers. What a thrill it is to realize that I did indeed meet my objectives – to entertain and to enlighten!

If ever I desired, I could wallpaper my office with rejection letters from publishers, but I prefer to use the complimentary notes from satisfied readers. After all, they're the ones who really matter.

As to that "sex and violence", I didn't have to add anything gratuitous. I just improved my descriptions.

To find out more about A Place To Call Home or its author, visit www.mindshadows.com/publishing

CHALK DUST MEMORIES

Farcical and humorous tales submitted by our readers.

Lester Pearson and His No Bowl Praise

by Allen Strike

Edwin Arthur Pearson, Lester Pearson's father, was an itinerant Methodist minister and, in 1897, he happened to be in Newton Brook, Ontario where Lester was born. It might be more precise, I suppose, to say that Mrs. E.A. Pearson was in Newton Brook at the time.

At any rate, in 1963-4 when the North York Board decided to build a secondary school in those parts (renamed Newton-brook) it seemed meet, right, and a bounden duty to have Lester Pearson, now Prime Minister, to open the new school.

In those days a school opening was a gala occasion, with red carpet, flags, potted plants, silver tea pots, and butane candles. The Major Domo of all this was Wm. "Bill" Dempsey who was later to develop festive occasions into a spectacle worthy of a Carthaginian Coronation. His whole show would be packed into an eighteen-wheeler

transport and Bill could whip-up a glittering ceremony at any location within the Township in twenty-three minutes.

In the initial planning for the school, the architects had included a Principal's Washroom, ensuite with the office. This had been the usual practice. However, during the time that the school was being built the



Board, in a fit of egalitarianism, had decided that in new schools the Principal and his guests would have to endure the rigours of public ablutions.

The result was that, although the necessary piping was already in place when the stop-order came through, the builders did no further work on the washroom. Where the

toilet was meant to be there was only a hole in the floor.

The Director of Education for North York at the time was the patrician F.W. Minkler. He had the presence of a deity on sabbatical leave from Mount Olympus. When Minkler spoke about education the Board listened. He was a great educator. (A later director was to say that the era of the Great Educator was over and in his case this was certainly true.) Minkler, naturally, was on hand for the opening of Newtonbrook Secondary School.

Just before the ceremonies were set to begin Lester Pearson asked Minkler if there was a washroom that he might use. "Of course Mister Prime Minister, this way" said Minkler and shepherded him to the door of the unfinished washroom. He opened the door and Lester Pearson stepped inside. After some fifteen seconds had passed the door opened slowly and the Prime Minister re-emerged to say,

"I think that your Principal's aim must be rather better than my own."

Allen Strike - sometimes known as Al or The Deadly Strike - entered gainful employment in the profession of teaching at the age of twenty-four. By the age of twenty-four and a half, he had decided that he did not like any form of gainful employment, but was not free to give it up until thirty three years later, in 1990.

Although his training was in Science and Mathematics he was always more interested in Art and Architecture. From his youth up, he never stopped painting, sculpting, photographing, and designing. He still does all that; floats around the St. Lawrence River in his houseboat, and writes farcical tales for STONY Bridges. Look for more of these in future issues.



“Children learn to read by reading.”

“Spelling and Grammar should be learned in the context of a child’s own work.”

“Children should not be required to memorize the times-tables. It is the concept that is important.”

These are just three of the stupid ideas that I fell for during my time in teaching.

I was not alone in preaching this nonsense. After the publication of *Living and Learning* - better known as the *Hall Dennis Report* - in 1968, there was quite an army of us talking like this.

How did that report, rich in rhetoric yet bereft of evidence sweep away the Ontario Curriculum (The Little Grey Book) and common report cards, and eventually spellers, readers, desks, classroom walls, marking, red pens, tests, the teaching of science, history, geography, music, art and teachers who dressed like adults?

Eventually the most commonly held belief about the role of teachers was that we were not teachers of subjects but rather facilitators of children’s learning - an idea so empty of responsibility, rigour, and accountability that almost anything was acceptable in classrooms. And what of those experienced teachers who knew it

was all folly, who knew from years of successful classroom teaching how to manage a classroom of children, who knew they couldn’t help children improve their skills without direct teaching, marking and testing, who closed their classroom doors to the crusaders, who refused to convert their classrooms into candy stores? They were shunned and ridiculed, sometimes drummed out of their schools along with their spellers and basal readers.

How does a thing like that happen? How did it continue for so long? It took the cold slap of the ‘Common Sense Revolution’ finally to put an end to it.

Reading Malcolm Gladwell’s book, *The Tipping Point, How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference* - a study of the machinery of creating a trend - provided a perspective on the life of *Hall Dennis*. Just as one person can start an epidemic like SARS, one person can, with the right set of circumstances and a little shove, start a fashion trend or sell an idea like *Hall Dennis*.

The *Hall Dennis Report*, unlike subsequent dusty Royal Commissions on Education, had what Gladwell calls the three necessary ingredients to tip an idea over into the mainstream:

- a) A handful of exceptional people to drive the idea - The Law of the Few.
- b) The Stickiness Factor.
- c) The Context.

The Law of the Few

“The success of any kind of

social epidemic is heavily dependent on the involvement of people with a particular and rare set of social gifts...”

Lloyd Dennis was such a man. He was well connected, knowledgeable and persuasive. Sure, there were other members of the Commission, but Lloyd Dennis was its author and its salesman. He was the powerhouse, and others like him, flocked to his side, and carried the message. And it stuck. But why? Lloyd Dennis had little classroom experience and the other Commissioners had none. Why would classroom teachers pay any heed to advice from virtual outsiders?

The Stickiness Factor

“The Stickiness Factor says that there are specific ways of making a contagious message memorable; there are relatively simple changes in the presentation and structuring of information that can make a big difference in how much of an impact it makes.”

The Hall Dennis report contained two essential ideas. The first, was that children should choose their own curriculum based on their own stage of development and their own needs; and the second was that when a child is learning, there can be no failure. Thus, marking and testing were forms of cruel punishment. The report called it a “form of barbarism in our day.”

There was no evidence or

~See *TIPPING*/Page 15

BOOK TALK

by Rob Fraser

~TIPPING/ continued from page 14

research to support either of these ideas, only florid rhetoric, but the little thing that made the big difference and tipped these two ideas into the mainstream was Dennis' metaphor of a classroom- the image of the classroom as a garden, the children as the seedlings requiring only careful observation and cultivation to blossom into full potential. The teacher, of course, became the tiller of the soil. It is lovely, isn't it?

The Context

Nonetheless, despite the memorable message, and the charismatic messengers, the report would not have seen the light of day

if it had not been 1968, a time of explosive growth in the number of teachers - comprised mostly of barely educated teenagers - that flooded the elementary classrooms during the sixties. That was the context into which the report was delivered. There were so many new teachers - not just in Ontario, but across North America - full of energy and youthful certainty, that the message and the metaphor had a willing audience. The sheer weight of our numbers 'tipped' the *Hall Dennis Report* into practice, and sidelined experienced teachers who had taught generations of children how to read, write and spell. A whole way of life in school was

tipped upside down.

But it is all over now, and strange as it may seem, beginning teachers today are working from a common curriculum as I did in 1965, with a common report card with marks and grades, as I did in 1965, and with textbooks, readers, and spellers as I did in 1965. It is as if thirty-five years of *Hall Dennis* never happened. It has simply vanished. The epidemic of rhetoric over results is clearly over. Accountability is the operating principle these days, and it may, with any luck, help to stop the stampede to independent schools and home schooling brought on by the years of rhetorical excess.

CLIFF'S THEATRE CLUB

This club has been running for more than twenty years, and has an active membership of about 60 members, mostly retired teachers.

It is run by Cliff Gatchell, formerly Head of Drama at Don Mills CI and a member of RTO District 23.

What it can offer you is downtown Toronto theatre opportunities (Tarragon, Passe Muraille, Factory, Artword, etc) at subscription prices. The advantage is that someone else does the bookings, and you are not

restricted to one theatre.

Cliff keeps his eye on promotional material and the reviews, and chooses the plays in order to give the club a variety, and a good sampling of what Toronto theatre has to offer.

Advance notice of what plays are going to be seen is only available to those who are members. If you are already subscribing to one theatre, arrangements can be made if that theatre is being booked.

The dates for the fall season are all Wednesdays: Oct. 15, Oct. 29, Nov.13, Nov. 26.

The cost is : \$84. for four plays. \$64. for three plays. \$24 for single plays.

If you would like to be on the mailing list, or would like further information, call or email :

Cliff Gatchell

Phone: 416-604-1647

email: cwgatchell@sympatico.ca

Note: There is also a winter season with four plays, and a spring season with four plays.

Call For Singers/Musicians!

Would you like to meet on a regular basis for an informal sing-along of the Oldies and Goodies? A piano, guitar, a voice, or whatever talent/else you may have (Bruce has a banjo) could provide accompani-

ment. The group could: play or sing seasonal or fun material, visit hospitals or seniors' homes, have a cabaret night, form a band. The nature and scope of the group will be self determined by the members. Provided there is sufficient interest, such an activity will

be organized. If you are interested in singing/playing/learning something new, contact one of the following:

Bruce Manning - wayfarer@idi-rect.com or phone 416- 730 0794,
or

**Frank Saliani - fsaliani@canada.com
416 - 281 - 3542.**

THE OTHER PATH

James Treliving

And as we traveled on together, I said

"My journey is almost over,
I will pray to God and ask
forgiveness from all those I
have offended."

And he said

"Why would you pray to God?"
Why not call on those
you have offended, ask for their
forgiveness to make amends.?

Then later I said

"I have so much to be thankful for,
I will pray to God and give thanks
for those blessings.

And he said

"Why would you pray to God?
Why not write to those who have
helped and supported you on
your journey... .give thanks to them
and be a steward for the Earth?"

Still later I said

"There are so many in need of homes,
food, water health and compassion,
I will pray to God to intervene on their behalf."

And he said

"Why would you pray to God?"
If the need is great and the cause is just,
why not offer your help or your support
and intervene yourself?"

When the time came to part,
I took the path I knew
and prayed to God
for forgiveness, thanks and intervention.
But he took the other path;
For him, God was not. 'out there'
But a consciousness incarnate in us all
That, if we listened, guided us how to act to one another.



The Conservatives, Tax Relief and the Future of Ontario Education

by
Jean Dilcock

Should you support a government which promises to relieve you of the burden of Education Taxes? The Tory election platform holds great appeal to most seniors on fixed pensions and faced with ever-increasing Property Tax raises. One look at your tax bill and you can see a fairly substantial saving (possibly up to one third of your bill) which will probably speak to you in a most beguiling way. Is this an issue which will persuade you to vote Conservative in the next election?

Mae Harman (the Toronto Star, April 5, 2003), of the Ontario Coalition of Seniors' Organizations, suggests that you should be highly suspicious and cautious of this tax "relief". She points out that the rebate is not capped. That means that the wealthier you are; the larger and more luxurious your home, the higher your rebate will be. Conversely, the more in-need you are, the less you will receive. Ms. Harman is insulted by this obvious

appeal to avarice and the affront to grandparents who might just care more for their grandchildren's education than they do for money.

In the same article, a number of other experts agreed with Ms. Harman's stand and also pointed out that it would appear that the Conservatives were trying to buy votes after slashing Home Care, raising Nursing Home fees and threatening private pension plan changes while ignoring or not considering the long-term effects of

"...The Center (American National Center for Education Statistics) showed that Ontario has sunk in spending from 22 in the years 1989-90 to 55 out of 63 for the years 1997-8. In US Dollars, New York spent \$10,521 per pupil and Ontario \$4,709 in 1997-8..."

fragmenting society by slashing the basic social principle that society as a whole is responsible for educating its young. These effects could be catastrophic pitting younger taxpayers already burdened with raising children, buying homes and other costs against seniors who are past those costs and needing such things as increased Health and Drug Plan

benefits.

Further, you might conclude that the policy takes no notice of the fact that the young pay the taxes that fund the Canada and Old Age pensions. Seniors must consider whether they want a large base of well-educated, well-paid taxpayers loading those pension plans or not. Considering the fact that Ontario Public Education has been underfunded for years (see the chart provided by the Canadian Taxpayers' Federation which follows this editorial), the possibility of endangering those plans is very real. The real future victims of this plan could very well be the poor, both senior and working.

As retired teachers, please consider this issue carefully. Are your interests truly being served by this "tax credit"?

One last word just might interest you. The following facts are taken from an OSSTF study which has used statistics taken from the American National Center for Education Statistics. The study looked at all the American States (50) and one territory and the 10 Canadian Provinces and two Territories in considering per pupil expenditure. The Center showed that Ontario has sunk in spending from 22 in the years 1989-90 to 55 out of 63 for the years 1997-8. In US Dollars, New York spent \$10,521 per pupil and Ontario \$4,709 in 1997-8. While Canada generally averaged less money per pupil, the discrepancy between American and Canadian Education spending does not bode well for Canada.

Jean Dilcock is a member of the Political Action Committee.

SUBSCRIPTIONS AND THE ARTS IN TORONTO

by
Doug Tallon

In the last issue of *STONY Bridges* we investigated inexpensive ways of attending the theatre.

The subscription package is another way to enjoy first class professional theatre. There are full subscriptions as well as flexible subscriptions. Some of our alternate theatre companies offer a pass where you choose not only the production but also the date you wish to attend.

Lets look briefly at the subscription. All of our major theatre, opera, ballet and symphony companies offer full subscriptions. The advantages of subscriptions are many. You know well in advance the date of your performance. You generally have the same seat for each performance.

Dining and parking perks are available to you as well as other advantages, which tend to vary.

Although full subscriptions tend to be rather expensive, that is not so true for flexible subscriptions. The Canadian Stage, Canadian Opera Company and National Ballet have these flexible subscriptions where you only attend three to five productions. You still know your date well ahead of the performance

and where possible you are given the same seats as well as the other perks a full subscriber receives. The Toronto Symphony offers many shorter series which cater to an individual's taste and interest and are spread throughout the regular season.

There are also many classical ensembles, which offer packages in the smaller venues around the city such as the Amici Chamber Ensemble, Toronto Consort, Tafelmusik and Sinfonia Toronto to name only a few. Their series consist of four to six concerts at a more rea-



sonable price.

The Toronto Philharmonia (formerly the North York Symphony Orchestra) offer some first class music very close to home at the Toronto Centre for the Arts. Other communities such as East York, Scarborough, Mississauga, and others serve the GTA.

The alternate theatre companies in Toronto have a wonderfully flexible plan to encourage subscribers. You buy a season pass,

which entitles you to attend eight performances. You decide how you wish to use the pass. You may use the pass for eight different productions or see four productions with your spouse or partner or a friend. There are many variations to the use of this pass. It also appeals to people who do not wish to be tied to a certain day. The patron has the flexibility to decide date and production.

Community theatre is right in our own backyard and is probably the biggest bargain of all the subscriptions available. In the next issue of *STONY Bridges* I will detail the many community companies who perform in the Toronto area.

If you would like to receive advance information about these many companies, plan to attend the speakers luncheon on October 21. The topic, Inexpensive Entertainment in Toronto, will highlight theatre, art galleries, muse-

ums, historic buildings and other inexpensive activities, which might be of interest to many RTO members.

Once again, if you have any questions about subscriptions, passes or inexpensive entertainment, please contact me.

Doug Tallon will be speaking on this topic on October 21. See page 8 for details. Doug can be reached at dougtours@rogers.com.

Bridge Report

by Frank Saliani

These are the Bridge results as of May 13, 2003 from sessions at Willowdale United Church. Come and join us for some comraderie and socializing. For further details or information write or call Frank Saliani at e-mail: frasalia@enoreo.on.ca or Phone 416 281 3542.

Challenge Hand Winners : Duplicate style competition

Date	North – South Pair(s)	East – West Pair(s)
May 13	Kathleen Elliott / Hazel Perkin	3 way tie
April 29	Carson Klinck / Bert Gates	Alan Ward / Geri McAllister
April 22	Bob & Inge Radko	Lila Belbin / Eileen Stanley
April 8	Wayne & Eileen Justesen	Marsh Morris / Clarice Giffen
March 25	Marilyn Butcher / Vic Suzuki	Lee / Geri tied Barb W./ Mary B.
March 18	Pat Peters / Xenia Cooper	Kathleen Elliott / George Vanderwerf
March 11	Inge Radko / Nada Dimitrievich	Mary Lutes / George Vanderwerf
Feb 25	Alan Ward / Polly Clarke	Eulaline & Alec Taylor
Feb 18	Eulaline & Alec Taylor	Alan Ward / Eileen Stanley
Feb 11	Kathleen Elliott / Hazel Perkin	Marilyn Butcher / Donna Mighton



The Table Champs:

Congratulations to the winners of the 1st five rounds: Eileen Stanley (May 13), Mary Elizabeth Lane, Carson Klinck, Marsh Morris (April 8,15), Alec Taylor (March 11),

The Slam Bidders:

		<u>Contract Bid (made)</u>
April 29	Eulaline Taylor / Hazel Perkin	6 Hearts (+ 1)
	Hazel Perkin / Wayne Justesen	6 Hearts
	Alec Taylor / Bert Gates	6 Diamonds
	Margaret Gates / Wayne Justesen	6 NT
	George Vanderwerf / Frank Saliani	6 Spades
April 22	Lois Lewis / Mary Lutes	6 Clubs (+ 1)
April 15	Mary Butler / Vic Suzuki	6 Spades (+ 1)
	Dave Fleming / Frank Saliani	6 NT
	Elizabeth McKeon / Nancy Walsh	6 Hearts
April 8	Lila Belbin / Donna Mighton	6 NT (+ 1)
	Hazel Perkin / Alan Ward	6 NT
	Wayne Justesen / Marsh Morris	7 Diamonds
March 25	Marilyn Butcher / Vic Suzuki	6 NT
	Marsh Morris / Clarice Giffen	6 Spades
	Hazel Perkin / Hue Campbell	6 Diamonds
	Hue Campbell / Bev Suzuki	6 Clubs
March 18	Eileen Justesen / Nancy Walsh	6 Hearts
March 11	Hardie McNeil / Bob Radko	6 NT
	Marilyn Johnson / Joyce Arnsby	6 Hearts



~ See BRIDGE/ page 20

~ BRIDGE/Continued from page 19

Feb 25	Eulaline & Alec Taylor Hue Campbell / Marilyn Butcher Nancy Walsh / Audrey Cartwright	6 NT 6NT (+ 1) 6 Clubs (+ 1)
Feb 18	Barb Woodward / Mary Butler Ruth Jacobs / Frank Saliani	6 Clubs 6 Hearts



HEALTH SERVICES REPORT

by
Sam Habib

1) Reminder

Retiring teachers have a 60 day window of opportunity to change from their employer's health plan to RTO health plans without the need for medical approval.

2) **Johnson Incorporated**, our health services provider, also offers a variety of insurance plans such as life, car and house insurance, and the "RTO/ERO LONG TERM CARE" plan. Some conveniences of service offered are a) a direct pay for prescription drugs, b) Electronic dental claim submissions, c) direct deposit of claims cheques.

3) All questions and/or problems, regarding all plans, should be directed to Johnson Incorporated who will fully explain these to your satisfaction.

4) For details about all health and insurance plans contact JOHNSON INCORPORATED:

SERVICE: 905 - 764 - 4884
1-800-461-4597
CLAIMS: 905 - 764 - 4888
1-800-638-4753
FAX: 905 - 882-5586

Calling All Members:

From time to time, events and opportunities that are potentially very desirable to the membership, emerge. We would like to share these in a more timely fashion. Unfortunately, the scheduling and publication of STONY Bridges, sometimes, does not make this easy for us. We are trying to correct this in a number of ways. Next year, for example, we shall publish a fourth edition of *STONY Bridges*. Two other ways to communicate more effectively with members are by telephone and by computer e-mail.

If you wish to be notified of these "difficult to get information out quick enough" events, please call me at 416 281 3542 or e-mail me at frasalia@enoreo.on.ca

MEMBERSHIP REPORT February 1– May 31, 2003

by

Penny McLeod - Smith, Membership Convenor

WHO IS NEW IN OUR DISTRICT ?

During the period from February 1 – May 31, 2003, there has been a major attempt to invite new retirees to our membership .Your hard work to help alert new retirees to the pleasures of joining our North York District has been very successful. At the same time, all the Toronto Districts have been working to help members find the best " Toronto District area " for them, and this also has seen a number of RTO members join our fold.

THE FOLLOWING HAVE JOINED US AT DISTRICT 23, AND WE HOPE TO WELCOME THEM SOON TO OUR NORTH YORK EVENTS:

A. In February: William Baulch, M. Elizabeth Ellison, Donald A. Feather, Carol Fiorotto, Nicole Giroux, Isabelle J. Leibovitch, Audrey Z. Long, Gerald M. Mackay, Hedviga Rakus-Wigglesworth, Miriam E. Rosen

B. In March: Harold Biderman, Donatella Dell'Agnese, Sharon Doyle, Joan Hinrichs, Millar D. Young

C. In April: W. Ruth Ferrier, Farley E. Fox, Asmah Kasim-Elliott, Howard Ledger, M. Ann McDonald, Margot Nutzenberger, Suzanne M. Supra

D. In May: Cynthia G. Eland, Shirley R. Harcourt-Vernon, Linda King, Stanley Kremer, Dennis McCusker, Mary Spergel

IN MEMORIAM

With great sadness we inform you of the passing of the following members of District 23. We extend our sympathy to their family.

February, 2003: nil

March, 2003: Douglas Doyle, W. Ronald Eland, Kenneth R. Fulford, Dula Maisie Reid, Pansy F. Seaman, Susan Sever, Ruth C. Smith, Evelyn A.L. Soame, Elizabeth Stewart, Mary E. Thompson

April, 2003: Walter Adamson, Dorothy Freure, Karl Nutzenberger, Patricia Rogan, Helen Searles, Hugh Vernon, M. Caroline Weir

May, 2003: J. Howard Langford, James Spergel

Note: Month shown is the date we received notification

A Death Out of Time

by
Jane Gardner

Two and a half years ago, these words didn't mean much to me. But in January 2001 when my son Bruce was killed in a traffic accident, I learned the meaning of these words, and my life was forever changed.

A close friend suggested to me, a couple of months after the funeral, that I should think about

contacting the Bereaved Families Association. A few months later, I called their Toronto

office at Yonge and Eglinton. (there are also affiliated associations across Ontario).

The Bereaved Families Association was formed in 1978, when two mothers who had lost children and had met at the Hospital for Sick Children, met again with each other for mutual support and comfort. This year the association is holding a 25th anniversary reunion dinner in May.

The Bereaved Families Association organizes support groups for parents who have lost children, and for children up to the age of 30, who have lost a parent or a sibling. The groups of usually eight to ten participants, are held in the office once a week for about eight weeks. The groups are led by two volunteers- trained facilitators who have already

been members of a group themselves. The participants share their thoughts confidentially, with others who have "walked in their shoes" , and can give the support and empathy that may help them on their journey through their pain and grief. The children who participate in a group at a younger age, may sometimes find that they want to take part in another group as they mature and see life in a different way. Grandparents who have lost grandchildren are also given support by this organization.

"The Bereaved Families Association organizes support groups for parents who have lost children, and for children up to the age of 30, who have lost a parent or a sibling."

I was greatly helped by attending a group, and I've continued to give time to the association by training to be a facilitator (and I truly receive back more than I give!)

When a parent loses a child, or a child loses a parent, friends and family often worry that there might be more that they can do to help them. By suggesting a call to Bereaved Families, you may be giving them a very special gift.

For more information, call 416-440-0290, or check the web-site www.bfotoronto.ca



GOODWILL REPORT

by
Nina Hillier

CHEERY HELLOS

Have you ever received a cheery "Get Well" card in the mail when you were feeling under the weather? If you have, you will remember how it brightened your day.

This is one of the things that the Goodwill Committee does for members of District 23, North York.

BIRTHDAY CARDS FOR THE OVER 80'S

If you know someone who is about to celebrate an 80th birthday, call Nancy Walsh at 416 – 968 – 2067 and she will be sure to send a card.

KEEPING IN TOUCH

We depend on our members to keep us informed about members who are ill, hospitalized, shut-in or bereaved. Please call a committee member if you know of someone who needs our Goodwill services.

Convenor

Nina Hillier: 416 – 221 – 4257

Assistant Convenor

Ruth Bradshaw: 905 – 472 – 4142

Cards

Ruth Bradshaw: 905 – 472 – 4142

Clara Strozyk: 416 – 445 – 6434

Nancy Walsh (over 80's): 416 – 968 – 2067

Telephone Calls

Anne McGee: 416 – 223 – 449

Vinny Coetzee: 416 – 621 - 6681



TRIPS AND EXCURSIONS

Grand River Luncheon Cruise/ page 23
 2Pianos4hands/page 24
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 Museum Walking Tour/page 25
 Niagara Casino/page 26

GRAND RIVER LUNCHEON CRUISE

Thursday, September 25, 2003

(Cut Off Date - Monday, September 15, 2003)

All Inclusive Price-\$61.00

Our day Includes:

9:00 a.m. SHARP	Departure from Willowdale United Church (<i>Limited parking, car-pool if possible</i>)
11:00	Board our cruise on the Grand River at Caledonia, Ontario Complimentary Coffee in Caledonia at their craft shop
11:45	AV presentation about the Grand River
12:00 noon	Live music show featuring "The Blazing Fiddlers"
12:30	Three hour Luncheon Cruise with strolling musician
1:00	Three course roast beef lunch on board the cruise boat
3:00	Refreshments served on return trip
3:30	Return to dock
5:30 (approx.)	Return to Willowdale United Church



*Name tags will be distributed on the bus.
 Please see page 27 for order form.*

THE ELGIN WINTER GARDEN THEATRE



2 PIANOS 4 HANDS

The hit Canadian Musical returns to Toronto with the original stars:
TED DYKSTRA
and RICHARD GREENBLATT

plus a tour of the Elgin Winter Garden Theatre
Wednesday, October 1, 2003
\$46.00.
(very limited seating available)

- 9 : 45 a.m. Meet in the lobby of the Elgin Winter Garden Theatre Centre, **189 Yonge St.** at Queen St.
- 10: 00 Tour begins. *Tour includes the backstage area of the Winter Garden Theatre, an early vaudeville dressing room and a restored silent movie projector.*
- 11: 45 Lunch will be on your own. Information about restaurant discounts will be in your package.
- 2:00 p.m. Performance in the Elgin Theatre
- 4: 00 p.m. Play ends

*Name tags and tickets will be distributed at the theatre
See page 29 for ticket order form*



They're at the Post they're off!

Thursday, October 30, 2003

(Cut Off Date: October 23, 2003)

12:00 noon

\$33.00

(includes admission, buffet lunch in the Post Parade Dining Room, all taxes and gratuity, How to Place a Bet brochure, and the Official Racing Program.)

Directions to Woodbine: 401 to 409 to 427 north to Rexdale Blvd.

See page 29 for ticket order form.

MUSEUM WALKING TOUR

Thursday, November 13, 2003
(Cut Off Date - October 15, 2003)
Museums' Price - \$ 14.00
GROUP LIMITED TO 25



Gardiner Museum of Ceramic Art III Queen's Park Crescent

Meet at the Museum at 10: 00 am
Guided Tour 10: 15 to 11: 15 am
Free time to browse other areas

Lunch on your own at the one of the many restaurants along Bloor Street
Suggestions will be available at the Museum
Museums are one long block apart on Bloor Street
OR
one stop on the Yonge-University Subway Line



Bata Shoe Museum St. George and Bloor Streets

Meet at the museum at 1:30 pm
Guided tour 1:45 to 2:45
Free time to browse on your own.

Name tags will be available at the Gardiner Museum

See page 29 for ticket order form.

NIAGARA CASINO
Wednesday, December 3, 2003
 (Cut Off Date: November 21, 2003)

- 8:15a.m. Coach will report to Willowdale United Church
- 8:30 Depart and travel to Niagara Falls
- 10:00 Arrive at Casino to enjoy casino action. Lunch on your own. A greeter will distribute any casino bonus that is being offered.
- 3:00p.m. Board coach and depart to arrive at the Outlet Mall for two hours shopping where discount coupons will be distributed (Canadian side).
- 5:30 Board coach and depart for Betty's Restaurant.
- 6:00 Enjoy a three choice dinner of beef, chicken or fish (your choice on arrival)



- 7:30 Board coach and sit back and enjoy the festival of lights then depart for home arriving at approximately 9.00 p.m.

Cost: \$49 for Coach, Dinner and Tour.

See page 27 for ticket order form



NOTE: It is helpful if you prepare individual cheques for each event. Be sure to include the tear-off slips.

TEAR OFF SLIPS

- Niagara Trip/ page 27
- Elgin Theatre/ page 29
- Woodbine/ Page 29
- Museum/ page 29
- Grand River/ page 27
- Champagne Breakfast/ page 31
- Christmas Luncheon/ page 31
- AGM/ page 31

**Niagara Casino,
Shopping, and Festival of Lights**

Wednesday, December 3, 2003

(Cut Off Date: November 21, 2003)

Name: _____

Guest(s): _____

Telephone: _____

Number of tickets _____ @ \$49.00 = _____

Make cheque payable to RTO/ERO District 23 and mail to:

Peter Lynch
135 Church St.
Weston, Ontario
M9N 1N6

GRAND RIVER LUNCH AND CRUISE

Thursday, September 25, 2003

(Cut Off Date - Monday, September 15, 2003)

Name: _____

Guests: _____

Telephone _____ # of tickets _____ @ \$61.00 = _____

Make cheques payable to RTO/ERO District 23 and send to:

Peter Lynch,
135 Church St.,
Weston, Ontario
M9N 1N6

Socials and Meetings

AGM/page 28

Champagne Breakfast/page 28

Christmas Luncheon/page 30

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Tuesday, September 9, 2003

10:30 - 2:00 p.m.

(Cut Off Date: Friday, September 4, 2003)

- ~ still the new venue
- ~ a social hour & lunch
- ~ a speaker

Moonlight Ballroom
3125 Bayview Ave.

Menu

- ~ Apricot house salad
- ~ Penne with tomato/basil and grilled chicken breast
- ~ Fruit crisp with ice cream

\$10.00

Come to meet your new executive and participate in the business of RTO/ERO, District 23, North York. Some amendments to the constitution will be presented. Should you wish a copy of the constitution prior to the meeting, call George Meek at 416 - 226 - 3568.

*~ See page 31 for registration form***CHAMPAGNE BREAKFAST**A celebration breakfast for the newly retired

Tuesday, September 23, 2003

9:30 a.m.

Moonlight Ballroom
3125 Bayview Ave., (south of Finch)

\$7.00

*Fee is waived for those who retired since August 2002.
 Please attend as our guest*

Please register by September 15, 2003*Please see page 31 for registration form.*

Elgin Winter Garden Theatre

2 Pianos 4 Hands
Wednesday, October 1, 2003

Name: _____

Guests: _____

Telephone: _____

_____ tickets at \$46.00 = \$ _____

Make cheque payable to RTO/ERO, District 23 and send to: Peter Lynch
 135 Church St.
 Weston, Ontario
 M9N 1N6

Name tags and tickets will be distributed at the theatre.



Thursday, October 30, 2003
(Cut Off Date: October 23, 2003)

Name(s): _____ Telephone: _____

of persons _____ @ \$33.00 = _____

Make cheque payable to RTO/ERO District 23 and mail to: Peter Lynch
 135 Church Street
 Weston, Ontario.
 M9N 1N6

Names will be checked at Woodbine.

MUSEUM TRIP

Thursday, November 13, 2003
(Cut Off Date - Tuesday, October 15, 2003)

Name _____

Guest(s) _____

Telephone _____ # of tickets.....@ \$14.00 = _____

Make cheques payable to RTO/ERO, District 23 and send to: Peter Lynch,
 135 Church St.,
 Weston, Ontario
 M9N 1N6

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2003

Cut Off Date: Friday, November 28, 2003

GRANITE CLUB

2350 Bayview Ave.,
(\$5.00 parking)

Social hour with cash bar - 11.00 a.m.

Luncheon - 12.00 noon

COST - \$30.00

MENU

Sweet corn and vegetable chowder (vegetable base)

Oven roasted Tom Turkey with savoury sage dressing

Warm cranberries and traditional gravy

Seasonal vegetables and potato du chef

Traditional English trifle topped with vanilla chantilly and strawberries

Coffee, decaffeinated coffee and tea

Special Entertainment

See page 31 for registration form

CHAMPAGNE BREAKFAST

Tuesday, September 23, 2003
9:30 a.m.



NAME: _____ Telephone: _____

Please check here if you are coming as our guest.

Please make cheque payable to RTO/ERO, District 23 and send to:

Mildred Frank
705 - 505 Cummer Ave.,
Toronto, Ontario.
M2K 2L8

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND LUNCH

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2002
(Cut Off Date - Friday, September 4, 2003)

NAME : _____

TELEPHONE: _____

Please make cheque payable to RTO/ERO District 23 and send to:

Mildred Frank
705 - 505 Cummer Ave.,
Toronto, Ontario.,
M2K 2L8

STONY Christmas Luncheon

Friday, December 5, 2003
(Cut Off Date: Friday, November 28, 2003)

Name: _____

Guest(s): _____

of tickets ___ @ \$30.00 = _____

Make cheque payable to RTO/ERO, District 23 and send to:

Mildred Frank
705 - 505 Cummer Ave.,
Toronto, Ontario.,
M2K 2L8



REFUND POLICY

1. All trips and events advertised in STONY BRIDGES and requiring a cheque and order form, will show a cut-off date. The date is set to enable us to comply with our commitment to pay for the event. No cheque should be post dated beyond this date.

2. Any booking can be cancelled at any time prior to the cut-off date by phoning the event organizer or Peter Lynch (trips), Mildred Frank (social).

3. Cancellations beyond this date will only be accepted if there is a waiting list for tickets, and we can sell your ticket to someone on the waiting list.

4. Ticket holders are welcome to sell, give or transfer their place or ticket privately.

CHANGE OF INFORMATION

Send to:
Penny McLeod Smith
P.O. Box 550
Gormley ON
L0H 1G0

Name: _____

New Address: _____

New Phone: _____

Old Address: _____

Old Phone: _____

Notes: _____

STONY Bridges
414 - 4005 Bayview Avenue
North York, Ontario
M2M 3Z9

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