

Ontario Women's History  
Network, Dept. of History  
University of Waterloo  
Hagey Hall, Waterloo Ontario,  
Canada N2L 3G1  
gcbbrandt@uwaterloo.ca  
Alyson.king@uoit.ca  
<http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/~owhn/>

# OWHN NEWSLETTER

<http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/~owhn/>

SEPTEMBER 2013

## OWHN/ RHFO at the Berks

OWHN/RHFO  
will hold its 2014  
AGM and Spring  
Events in Toron-  
to in conjunction  
with the Berk-  
shire Conference  
of Women Histo-  
rians

May 22-25, 2014

Walking tour,  
panel, reception  
and more

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## Enticing Entrées to Women's History

### Friday, April 5:

Friday's program started with a guided tour of the Ingersoll Cheese and Agricultural Museum. After a tasty supper at the museum, the evening continued at the Elmhurst Inn and Spa with the keynote address by Franca Iacovetta, Professor of History at University of Toronto and Marlene Epp, Professor of History and Peace and Conflict Studies at University of Waterloo. Their talk, "The Making of *Edible Histories, Cultural Politics: Towards a Canadian Food History*," gave the audience a tour of this edited collection which explores the interconnections between "foodways" and gender, immigration, politics, religion, medicine and more. Both their talk and the edited

collection stressed the diversity of Canadians' relationships with food and food traditions. The evening concluded with a short AGM and reception, where we embraced the theme of the conference by partaking of excellent food and beverages.

### Saturday, April 6:

The first panel on "Preserving and Presenting Women's History in Historic Kitchens" with Michelle Goodridge, Special Collections Librarian, Guelph University surveyed the wide range of Guelph's collection of cookbooks.

Fiona Lucas, Co-Founder and former President, Culinary Historians of Canada, spoke about how the often-neglected

Catherine Parr Traill's *The Female Emigrant's Guide* contains valuable information about women's lives. This guide blends multiple genres as it can be read as a regional cookbook, emigrant guide, backwoods and household manual.

Bridget Wranich, Program Officer, Mya Sangster, Lead Cook, and Elizabeth Bair, Volunteer Historic Cook from Fort York introduced the fort's program that relies on the help of dedicated volunteer researchers and recreates the experience of hearth cooking at Fort York. The speakers engaged our senses as they described the physicality of

*(Continued on page 2)*

## Heritage Fairs Award



OWHN's award in women's history for the Ontario Heritage Fairs Association was presented at the regional fairs in 2013. Students received a newly designed ribbon and an OWHN pin, along with a certificate. OWHN has received much positive feedback about this award. The Heritage Fairs allow students to act as historians, interpreters, and story-tellers.

The criteria for OWHN's award are:

- Winning projects must have a primary focus on women in Canadian history and the ways in which women have contributed to Canadian society. It may deal with Canadian women at the local, provincial, national or international level.
- Projects must provide evidence that the student has thought critically about one or more of the following: historical significance, primary and secondary sources, continuity and change, cause and consequence, possible interpretations of the student's chosen theme.
- Students must be able to present project in an engaging and convincing fashion.

## Women and Food (con't)

cooking on the hearth, the sounds when classes of school kids participate, and our taste buds with samples of some of the treats they make.

In the second panel, Gary Draper, presented the gendered elements of community and commercial cookbooks in the first half of the 20th century. He noted that men are often not depicted in cookbooks and that when they are, they typically are presented as workers whereas women are shown alone and in family contexts. Wendy Mitchinson, Professor and Canada Research Chair, University of Waterloo, traced the historic routes of obesity and demonstrated that the present-day mother-blaming ignores the complexity of obesity and how long it has been with us. Mother-blaming ignores factors such as the overwhelming and often contradictory advice, body norms, and family dynamics. Women appeared as skilled food workers, mothers and wives in the talk by Scott Gillies, Curator, Ingersoll Cheese and Agricultural Museum. Amongst delivering odes about cheese, he took us through how women such as Lydia Ranney, the first teacher of cheese making, played a large role in the development of the cheese industry in the Ingersoll area.



The luncheon keynote address was given by Carolyn Blackstock, Historian, Heritage Specialist and blog writer on “The Women of the 1906 Berlin Cookbook.” We heard about some of the women behind the Berlin Cookbook as we ate recipes taken from this community cookbook created by women of Berlin, nowadays Kitchener, Ontario. These women were from a range of ethnic groups and various marital and economic statuses.

The final set of presentations illustrated how food can be used to explore and negotiate cultural identities. Alison Norman, SSHRC postdoctoral fellow, Trent University spoke on the hybridity of food practices on the Six Nations Reserve near Brantford, Ontario. Six Nations women formed women’s groups that often catered events as fundraisers and used the funds raised for the betterment of the reserve. Continuity and change in three generations of her family’s food practices formed the subject of the talk by Emily Weiskopf-Ball, doctoral candidate at Laurentian University. She noted that while men and women participate in food preparation, the women of her family were reluctant to give up their place as the makers of traditional food. Nadia Jones-Galiani, a postdoctoral fellow at the University of South Florida, discussed the role of coffee and rituals around the serving of coffee as a site of negotiation in her interviews with Iraqi Refugee women. We heard how the presentation of coffee reflected the status of the host and the guest and both opened and closed avenues of discussion.

Video recordings of the presentation are available on YouTube—just search for: OWHN 2013 Foodways Conference.



**MARK YOUR  
CALENDAR**  
*2014 Spring Gathering  
at the Berkshire  
Conference of Women  
Historians  
May 22-25, 2014*

**REMINDER:**  
Renew your  
membership for  
2014!

# Minutes of the AGM, April 2013

## Ontario Women's History Network Annual General Membership Meeting April 5, 2013-Ingersoll, Ontario (excerpts)

Present: Executive: Linda Ambrose, Gail Cuthbert Brandt, Sharon Cook, Jane Errington, Rose Fine-Meyer, Sarah Hogenbirk, Alyson King, Sandra Kritzer, Julia Roberts, Jan Haskings-Winner, and many OWHN member attendees.

Regrets: Sharon Cook, Sandra Kritzer

1. **Alyson King, Chair**, called the meeting to order at 800pm. Alyson asked for approval of the 2012 AGM meeting minutes and the agenda. Approval of the 2012 Minutes and the Agenda: Moved by Jane Errington and seconded by Linda Ambrose. The motion was passed.

### Report of the Chair:

Alyson thanked those involved with the 2013 Conference planning, especially members of the executive who spent much time planning and organizing the weekend conference, in particular Gail, Tina, and Julia.

### *Ontario Heritage Fairs*

Rose noted that Heritage Fairs had been reduced due to teacher labour situations; they expect only 12-15 fairs to be held this year. As with last year, OWHN sent pins and ribbons. Last year Carol White sent a letter that the OWHN award was well received. It was handed out and OWHN was given credit at all 20 of the Ontario Regional Fairs. OWHN received a photo from one of the winners of our award.

*Berkshire Conference of Women Historians*, to be held Toronto, May 22-25, 2014. OWHN has submitted 2 proposals for:

A panel: *Pushing the Borders of Curriculum: Teaching Women's History in Schools, Universities and Beyond*, with Dr. Joan Simalchik (Coordinator, Women and Gender Studies Program, Department of Historical Studies, University of Toronto, Mississauga); Dr. Jan Noel (Associate Professor, Department of History, University of Toronto); and, Michelle MacArthur (Doctoral Candidate, Centre for Drama, Theatre and Performance Studies at the University of Toronto); and,

A Roundtable: *Encounters in Women's History: The Influence of Alison Prentice on women's history, feminist scholars, and education*, with Dr. Alison Mackinnon (Emeritus Professor, University of South Australia), Dr. Natalie Zemon Davis (Professor Emeritus, University of Toronto), Dr. Elizabeth Smyth (Professor and Vice Dean, School of Graduate Studies, University of Toronto), Dr. Rose Fine-Meyer (Lecturer, OISE/University of Toronto), Dr. Dianne Miller (Professor, University of Saskatchewan), Paula Bourne (CWSE Senior Associate Scholar, OISE/University of Toronto)

In addition, OWHN is a local sponsor and will be hosting a women's history walk based on Pat Staton's book, "Toronto Women:

A Walk Through History" as well as some workshops with teachers.

*The Membership directory* has been created and was in the conference bags; *The Videos* from last year's conference were now uploaded to YouTube. *The OWHN Newsletter* was sent out last fall. Alyson asked for members to send news or announcements to be included in the next Newsletter. *Women's History Poster 2012* was also sent out with the Newsletter. Alyson reminded everyone to please renew their memberships.

2. **Treasurer Financial Report, Gail Cuthbert Brandt** provided statements of the Treasurer's Financial report which was made available for all attendees. Gail noted that report shows 2 years clearly not-for-profit. We only have about 40 paid members but hope to improve the numbers in 2013. "*Nancy's Very Own Foundation*" helped us significantly in 2012 with the expenses at Fort York (OWHN 2012 conference). Perhaps we can set up an online charitable donation option which might increase donations to OWHN.

Yearly contributions to Green Dragon Press for the *Women's History poster*. We usually give \$2000. ETFO and others provide the rest. We hope to continue to do this again this year. The costs for *Ontario Heritage Fair* ribbons and awards are listed on the report.

You can see from the report that our *income* was \$8441.00 and *expenditures* were \$8232.57 with a balance at the end of 2012 was \$208.43.

Gail thanked our Auditor Dr. Marlene Epp for her work to ensure our financial report was in order.

Gail asked for approval of the Treasurer's report. Motion seconded by Margaret Kechnie.

Business arising from the report: Discussion followed about the Women's History poster. Jane E. moved that we support the poster this year, seconded by Tina Bates and the motion was passed.

### 3. **New Business**

It was confirmed that the 2014 OWHN conference will take place in Toronto and partner with the Berkshire conference. There will be OWHN panels as well as sessions with teachers at UTS.

Discussion also took place about the 2015 conference possibly about world war one, or suffrage and it was decided to consider Ottawa as a possible venue. Others felt it was time to go north and that the 2015 conference should take place in Northern Ontario. Discussion about the importance of the date 2017 in terms of suffrage and much discussion followed about commemorations/partnering with various museums/exhibits to honour these historic periods for Canadian women.

Pat Staton spoke of donating OWHN files to the Archives of Ontario. She suggested that OWHN designate some

(Continued on page 4)

## Minutes of the AGM (con't)

*(Continued from page 3)*

one as the archivist to continue to maintain the files. It was decided that the Secretary of OWHN should also be the Archivist.

Discussion followed about the potential of digitizing the OWHN files before sending them to the Ontario Archives and Franca Iacovetta suggested that it might be possible to do this work at the University of Toronto (part of the legacy project) Rose, secretary, will take care of the digitization project.

Beth Acheson spoke at the meeting about upcoming Federal government commemorations and how Senator Nancy Ruth was pushing hard for museums to include women and racialized groups in all commemoration projects. She also has been very active in making recommendations about experts in the field for the government to consider consulting. She suggested that OWHN explore the funding options, especially in upcoming commemorations, including 2017 and she encouraged OWHN to consider partnering with other organizations for funding and projects.

### 4. Election of Executive Officers (1st of a 2 year term)

Chair: Jane Errington (2013-2015)

Vice-Chairs: Christina Bates

Treasurer: Gail Cuthbert Brant

Secretary/Archivist: Rose Fine-Meyer

Members-at-large: Linda Ambrose, Jan Haskings-Winner, Sharon-Anne Cook, Julia Roberts, Sandra Kritzer, Sarah Hogenbirk, Pat Staton, Emily Weiskopf-Ball, Nadia Jones-Gailani

Past Chair: Alyson King

### The meeting was adjourned.

Rose Fine-Meyer, Secretary, April, 2013

## Herstoriescafe.ca

Over the past year, we held talks that included a diverse range of speakers who uncovered a range of stories: the importance of the women in William Lyon Mackenzie's family, the struggles that young women faced and continue to face in the legal profession, and why high heels exist. HerstoriesCafe talks also interrogated the absence of women's histories honoured in plaques, and celebrated the work of rural women in education and the preservation of local heritage and food history.

2013 programming has included Janet Schwartz, "Women in the life of William Lyon Mackenzie" (January 30, 2013); Abby Bushby and Josee Bouchard, "History of the Women's Law Association" (February 21, 2013); Elizabeth Semmelhack at the Bata Shoe Museum (March 6, 2013); Kaitlin Wainwright, plaques and markers program coordinator for Heritage Toronto (May 23, 2013); and, Dorothy Duncan on "You feed

your pigs and cattle more scientifically than you feed your families: the history of Women's Institutes" (June 6, 2013).

On September 25th, 2013, we will also feature the work of Valerie Knapp at the Guild Shop, who will be speaking about her journey as an artist, and craft, domesticity and femininity. Nadia Jones-Gailani will be our speaker on November 27th. She will be discussing new interpretations of modesty and sexuality amongst young veiled migrant women in Toronto's Iraqi Muslim community. Please visit [herstoriescafe.com](http://herstoriescafe.com) for more details. You can also check out our website for newly uploaded **teacher resources**, available in both English and French. Please feel free to send us your email contact if you would like to get on our monthly mailing list. Looking forward to seeing you at our talks! Rose Fine-Meyer and Kate Zankowicz.



**Thanks!!**

To the OISEIUT  
for sponsoring the  
mailing of this  
Newsletter with  
the Ontario  
Women's History  
Month Poster.

Send items for the  
next Newsletter to:

Alyson King

([Alyson.king@uoit.ca](mailto:Alyson.king@uoit.ca))

Or

Sarah Hogenbirk

([sarahhogenbirk@](mailto:sarahhogenbirk@)

[email.carleton.ca](mailto:email.carleton.ca)



## OWHN/RHFO at the “Berks”

OWHN/RHFO will be at the Berkshire Conference of Women Historians, May 22-25, 2014 at the University of Toronto, <http://berksconference.org/>. OWHN/RHFO is a sponsor of the first Berkshire Conference of Women Historians to be held outside of the United States.

As part of our sponsorship, OWHN/RHFO is hosting a Women’s History Walk around the area of the University of Toronto. The Walk will take place on May 22, starting at noon and will be followed by a reception and book signing with Pat Staton, author of *Toronto Women: A Walk Through History*. In addition, the two sessions organized by OWHN/RHFO have been accepted and will be held during the Conference: a roundtable session entitled “Encounters in Women’s History: The Influence of Alison Prentice on Women’s History, Feminist Scholars, and Education” with Alison Mackinnon (University of South Australia), Elizabeth Smyth (University of Toronto), Dianne Miller (University of Saskatchewan), Paula Bourne (OISE/University of Toronto), and Jan Noel (University of Toronto); and, a panel presentation entitled “Pushing the Borders of Curriculum: Teaching Women’s History in Schools, Universities and Beyond” with Joan Simalchik (University of Toronto Mississauga), Michelle MacArthur (University of Toronto), and Jacqueline Akins (Community College Of Philadelphia).

As discussed at the 2012 and 2013 Annual General Meetings, we will be holding our 2014 Annual General Meeting and gathering during or near the Berkshire Conference dates. Stay tuned for more details about OWHN member events.

## News, etc.

**Alison Prentice**, a founding member of OWHN and a distinguished scholar of women’s history and the history of education, was made a member of the Order of Canada in recognition of her “pioneering contributions as a scholar, advancing the field of women’s history and the history of education.” More information on this honour can be found at: <http://www.gg.ca/document.aspx?id=15215>.

Keep an eye on the October 29th ceremony for the **Governor-General’s Awards in Commemoration of the Persons Case**: <http://www.swc-cfc.gc.ca/dates/gg/index-eng.html#tab1>

**OWHN PIN**: The new OWHN pins given out at the Heritage Fairs are also on sale for \$3 at the spring conference.

### **Clothes Tell Stories (www.clothestellstories.com)**

This beautiful and useful new website compiled by the Costume Committee of the International Committee on Museums shows how to use clothing collections to study and illustrate history and culture. A good resource for student projects. **OWHN member Tina Bates** contributed a section on the website devoted to the nurse’s uniform and how it can tell important stories about working women, based on her book, *A Cultural History of the Nurse’s Uniform*, which has won the Costume Society of America’s Davenport award for best book on the topic of dress for 2012.

History teachers looking for resources (English and French), curriculum updates, interesting articles, and so on, can check out the **OHASSTA website**: [www.ohassta.org](http://www.ohassta.org).

### *Toronto Women – A Walk Through History*, **Pat Staton** Gr.7 – 12 Adult

“A walking tour of eight Toronto neighbourhoods: Buildings, monuments, public art by and about women who have contributed in the fields of politics, education, culture, social justice and the environment. Each section describes the route, places of interest and biographies of more than 80 women plus selected resources.”  
- See more at: <http://greendragonpress.com/history.html>

### *Sex, Lies, and Cigarettes: Canadian Women, Smoking, and Visual Culture, 1880-2000*, **Sharon Anne Cook**

“Despite well documented health risks, young women are still drawn to the act of smoking and continue to smoke at an alarming rate. A century ago, women were vocal leaders of campaigns against tobacco across North America. In *Sex, Lies, and Cigarettes*, Sharon Anne Cook explores the history of the paradoxical relationship between women and the cigarette, in a sensitive and lively description of the many different meanings that smoking has held for women.”

- See more at: <http://www.mqup.ca/sex--lies--and-cigarettes-products-9780773539778.php#sthash.DborZuhN.dpuf>

The Hilda Neatby Prize - English Article for 2013 was awarded to **Sheyfali Saujani**, "Empathy and Authority in Oral Testimony: Feminist Debates, Multicultural Mandates, and Reassessing the Interviewer and her 'Disagreeable' Subjects." *Histoire social/Social History*, vol. XLV, no. 90 (November 2012), 361-391.  
“Sheyfali Saujani’s article makes significant contributions to feminist historical theory and methodology, demonstrating that oral history interviews can contain conversational ruptures in which interviewees withhold empathy and assert authority. According to Saujani, some interviewees rejected being addressed as ethnic subjects, for in their views, “ethnic” labelling contained subtle insinuations of ignorance.” - See more at: [http://www.cha-shc.ca/en/Prizes\\_24/items/21.html](http://www.cha-shc.ca/en/Prizes_24/items/21.html)

Ontario Women's History Network  
*Le réseau d'histoire des femmes en Ontario*  
**MEMBERSHIP FORM / FORMULAIRE D'ADHÉSION**  
**2014**

*The aim of the network is to promote the study and dissemination of women's history throughout Ontario. /  
Le but du réseau est de promouvoir l'étude, ainsi que la diffusion de l'information concernant l'histoire des femmes en Ontario.*

\_\_\_ Membership Renewal / Renouvellement d'adhésion (1 January to 31 December/1 janvier à 31 décembre)

\_\_\_ New Member / Nouveau membre (1 January to 31 December/1 janvier à 31 décembre)

\_\_\_ Yes, I would like to join the Ontario Women's History Network (OWHN). I enclose:  
Oui, j'aimerais devenir membre du Réseau d'histoire des femmes en Ontario (RHFO). J'inclus :

\_\_\_ \$25 Membership / 25\$ Cotisation

\_\_\_ \$15 Full Time Student, Retired / 15\$ Étudiant à plein temps, retraité

\_\_\_ \$40 Annual Sustaining / 40\$ Cotisation de soutien

\_\_\_ Donation/Dons. OWHN has charitable status (#891772246 RR 0001) and charitable donation receipts will be issued for donations of \$10 or more./ Les dons, en sus des cotisations, donnent droit à des déductions d'impôt au titre de dons charitables, #891772246 RR 0001. Le Réseau émettra un reçu pour tout don de \$10 et plus.

Please make cheque payable to **Ontario Women's History Network**. / S.V.P. assurez que le chèque soit établi au nom de l'**Ontario Women's History Network**.

Please complete (Print) / S.V.P. complétez (imprimer)

Name / Nom : \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation / Profession : \_\_\_\_\_

Address / Adresse postale: \_\_\_\_\_

Areas of Interest or Expertise / Domaine d'intérêt : \_\_\_\_\_

Home / Domicile #: \_\_\_\_\_ Business / Bureau #: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail / Courriel: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax / Télécopie: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you want to be included in the OWHN Directory? / Voulez-vous être inclus dans la répertoire du RHFO ?  
Yes / Oui \_\_\_\_\_ No / Non \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to / Postez à : **OWHN / RHFO**, c/o Dr. Gail Cuthbert Brandt, 906558 Road 12, R.R. 4 Bright, ON N0J 1B0