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OWHN NEWSLETTER

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

OCTOBER 2010

Ten Years of Feminism

The Spring 2010 OWHN conference celebrated the feminism of 1960-1970. An exciting and informative program included a behind-the-scenes visit to the Royal Ontario Museum, talks by Ursula Franklin, Martha Goodings, Marie Hammond-Callahand, Cerise Morris, Beth Atcheson, Alison Prentice, Linda Ambrose, Tracy Penny Light, and Rose Fine-Meyer. Some of these talks were video-recorded and are posted at the OWHN website.

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Launching the Second Wave: Voice of Women

On Saturday morning, the conference started off with three fascinating perspectives on the group Voice of Women (VOW): Ursula Franklin, Martha Goodings, and Marie Hammond-Callahand. We were fortunate to have Ursula Franklin lead off with a discussion of the early days of VOW's activism. Ursula

emphasized the point that VOW was a women's peace movement—a movement that was not simply about speeches; everyone did something. It was these women who undertook the research on peace issues at the height of the Cold War.

Following Ursula Franklin's talk on the early days of the VOW, Martha Goodings, a former Ontario Council chair for the VOW, reflected on her personal experiences with VOW since the 1970s. For Martha, the VOW was a godsend in her life as a wife and mother in the suburbs. VOW provided a political and activist outlet for many women as they ad-

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Fashion Trends in the 1960s

Senior Curator Alexandra Palmer led the OWHN delegates on a Friday evening tour of the Royal Ontario Museum collection of textiles and fashions from the 1960s.

Dr. Palmer is the Nora E. Vaughan Fashion Costume Curator for the Graduate Programme in Art History at York University. She is also a professor in Fine Art History at the University of Toronto and is the exhibition editor for *Fashion Theory: The Journal of Dress, Body & Culture*. Dr. Palmer's research as a costume and textile historian covers the his-

tory of western textiles and fashionable dress, with particular emphasis on the 20th and 21st centuries. Dr. Palmer has authored catalogue essays for many international exhibitions. Her book *Couture & Commerce: The Transatlantic Fashion Trade in the 1950s* (2001) won a Clio award for Ontario history. Dr. Palmer is currently working on *Christian Dior: Constructing History 1947-1957*, to accompany the exhibition at the Royal Ontario Museum planned for fall 2011.

OWHN delegates were treated to an outstanding talk

by Dr. Palmer. Many individual items from the 1960s collection were presented on tables for delegates to view closely. Delegates were also privy to a private tour of the costume collection in the Patricia Harris Gallery of Textiles & Costume on the fourth floor.

After the talk and tour, delegates attended a reception held at the Duke of York Pub. A wonderful evening was had by all!!

Rose Fine-Meyer

HerstoriesCafe

A forum for those who work on and are interested in women's history—a community of like-minded people.

Coordinators Rose Fine-Meyer and Kate Zankowicz announce the inauguration of Herstories Café which aims to start conversations between history enthusiasts, historians, archivists, museum practitioners, history teachers and students.

“Think of it as a salon: a place to share ideas, pool historical resources, and stimulate debate in an intimate and relaxed setting.”

Cafe talks will be located throughout the city of Toronto,

in places which are historically relevant to the evening topic, and will often include an on-site historical walking tour.

Tentative Schedule:

November 23, 2010: **Nina Bascia**, “Women and Unions” at the Centre for Social Innovation, 215 Spadina Avenue 5-7 pm.

January 20, 2011: **Afua Cooper**, Topic and Location TBA

March 08, 2011: **International**

Women's Day at the Cumberland House, International Student centre: University of Toronto campus, St. George. Speakers TBA

Friday, April 2011. “Women and Museums” at the Food Studio, ROM. Speaker: TBA
May, 2011. “Women and Food” at the Gladstone Hotel

Website: <http://herstoriescafe.blogspot.com/>

Prizes

Dr. Kristina Huneault, a Concordia University Research Chair in Art History, is the 2010 winner of the Marion Dewar Award presented each year by the National Capital Committee on the Scholarship, Preservation and Dissemination of Women's History.

2010 John Bullen Prize of the Canadian Historical Association: **Dr. Amélie Bourbeau of the Department of History at Laurentian University**, for her doctoral thesis: *La réorganisation de l'assistance chez les catholiques montréalais : la Fédération des Œuvres de charité candiennes-françaises et la Federation of Catholic Charities, 1930-1972.* (UQÀM, 2009).

**REMINDER:
Renew your
membership for
2011**

News from Northern Ontario

From **Sara Burke**, Chair of History at **Laurentian University, Sudbury**:

The 2010 John Bullen Prize of the Canadian Historical Association was awarded to **Dr. Amélie Bourbeau of the Department of History at Laurentian University**, for her doctoral thesis: *La réorganisation de l'assistance chez les catholiques montréalais : la Fédération des Œuvres de charité candiennes-françaises et la Federation of Catholic Charities, 1930-1972.* (UQÀM, 2009). The prize, in the amount of \$500, was awarded in 2010 for the outstanding historical dissertation written by a Canadian citizen or landed immigrant living in Canada accepted for a doctoral degree at a Canadian university between 1 October 2008 and 30 September 2009. The award was given in May 2010 at the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Historical Association at Concordia University, Montreal. http://www.cha-shc.ca/en/Prizes_24/items/15.html

Linda M. Ambrose, “Zelma and Beulah Argue: Sisters in the Canadian Pentecostal Movement,” in *Winds from the North: Canadian Contributions to the Pentecostal Movement*, Michael Wilkinson and Peter Althouse, eds. (Leiden & Boston: Brill Academic Publishers, 2010), 99-127.

Laurentian University will celebrate its 17th annual **Women's History Week** from October 18-22, 2010 with a series of “open classrooms” including lectures in the History, Sociology, and Women's Studies departments. On Tuesday, October 19, we will host a “**Brown Bag Discussion: Working on Work-Life Balance, / Causerie midi : Les défis de la conciliation travail-famille.**” On Thursday, October 21, at 7 p.m. we look forward to this year's **LEAF Sudbury** event: the world premiere of **Recovering Love, a documentary film** about women and addiction. A Q&A and reception will follow with the film's Director Laura Sky and Executive Director Diane Massicotte.

Lessons in Liberation: Teaching the Women's Movement of the 1960s

The last session of the day during the spring conference was entitled “**Lessons in Liberation: Teaching the Women's Movement of the 1960s, An Interactive Workshop**” and featured three presenters who are teachers of history: **Dr. Linda Ambrose**, from Laurentian University in Sudbury; **Dr. Tracy Penny Light**, from St. Jerome's University, in Waterloo; and **Rose Fine-Meyer**, winner of the Governor General's Award for Excellence in the Teaching of Canadian History from OISE in Toronto.

Each presentation proved to be very practical with conference participants taking away lots of practical suggestions for making the history of the second wave women's movement come alive in the classroom. Linda Ambrose invited audience participation as she presented the group with the challenge of making suggestions about what should ideally be included in a course for undergraduates studying Canadian women's history in the second half of the twentieth century. Lively debate and a plethora of suggestions sur-

faced as participants offered their ideas about topics, texts, resources, and films that they have successfully incorporated in their own teaching; ideas that they encouraged Linda to build into the course she was revamping for the fall of 2010. Tracey Penny Light shared a wealth of ideas about how to incorporate teaching strategies that both model and reinforce feminist practices. Using Tracey's concepts, participants left the workshop with several new ideas about how to achieve greater student engagement through a variety of student-centered learning activities. Rose Fine-Meyer focused on sources and resources that can be used in the classroom to engage students with the texts, materials, and ideas that typified the women's movement in the 1960s. The group was transported back in time as Rose reviewed a set of instructions for how to lead a consciousness-raising group and participants offered suggestions about what might be included in a time capsule to represent the 1960s. With such a rich exchange of ideas, there was no shortage of inspiration to take home to our classrooms!

Linda Ambrose

Royal Commission on the Status of Women

Dr. Cerise Morris spoke to “Simple Justice” is not so simple: the RCSW then and now.” Dr. Morris discussed the structure and findings of the Royal Commission, profiling the insights of the Commissioners and those who presented to the Royal Commission. Beth Atcheson offered a personal account of the early days of Second-Wave Feminism, recounting some of the genuinely ground-breaking achievements of women in those years, many of which were grounded in the recommendations of the RCSW. At the same time, she identified the movement's failures, including the lack of a national child-care act. Beth's commitment to feminism has not dimmed at all, as evidenced by her central role in the Feminist History Society, which has now published its first volume. To become a subscribed member, please contact the Feminist History Society at 2938 Dundas St. W., P.O. Box 70573, Toronto, Ontario M6P 4E7. Charitable receipts will be given for a portion of the subscription cost.

Sharon Cook & Lorna McLean

News from Nipissing University, North Bay (sent in by Katrina Srigley)

Natalie Zemon Davis will give the Nipissing History Department's 2010-2011 keynote address on September 24. Her talk is titled: Decentering History: Local Storytelling and Cultural Crossing in a Global World.

Katrina Srigley, *Breadwinning Daughters: young single women in a Depression-era city, 1929-1939* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010)

Katrina Srigley and Stacey Zembrzycki, *Remembering Family, Analyzing Home: Oral History and the Family, Oral History Forum d'histoire orale*, 2009.

Research Note: OWHN's History Conferences

Title: "We never blew our own horn enough ... typical women!" The work of the Ontario Women's History Network to promote women's narratives in public school history courses.

Beginning in the 1970s, public school boards in Ontario took steps to prohibit gender discrimination in schools through the development of affirmative action and equal opportunity policies. Although policies were in place, they did not significantly alter history textbooks or course guidelines, which continued to produce unbalanced and unrealistic portrayals of women. Teachers found ways to sidestep restrictive history guidelines and textbooks by using supplementary materials to support their history teaching. This paper reflects on the work of teachers to reach out to feminist scholars and women's organizations that challenged traditional historical frameworks through the publication of historical materials from a feminist perspective.

As a case study, I examine the work of the Ontario Women's History Network/Le Réseau d'histoire des Femmes en Ontario (OWHN), to establish a distinct network between the work of feminist scholars and history

teachers. This examination is part of a larger project which draws on teachers, publishers, women's organizations and others to challenge the ways in which women have been integrated, subsumed, ignored or marginalized within history courses in Ontario. OWHN played a significant role in promoting women's historical materials but also in building networks between teachers, students, scholars, and communities through the joint publication of resources and twice-yearly conferences. The conferences provided a venue for educators to make contacts, develop projects and acquire classroom materials.

But despite the many successful conferences throughout its twenty years, OWHN struggled to maintain an influential position in the continuing shifting political environment of education. Its limited size and financial status, and failure to develop more permanent networks, restricted the organizations ability to expand and sustain effective leadership. However, the organization did provide much needed opportunities for teachers to access historical resources about women and share their interests in a like-minded community.

**For more information, contact:
Rose Fine-Meyer**



Ursula Franklin and Martha Goodings reflect on The Voice of Women.

**Ontario Women's History Network, Dept of History ,
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"GENERATIONS: Exploring Race, Sexuality, and Labor across Time and Space," June 9-12, 2011, University of Massachusetts, Amherst. URL: <http://berksconference.org/announcements/calls-for-papers/2011-berkshire-conference-on-the-history-of-women/>

Feminism & Teaching Symposium, April 2011, URL: <http://feminismandteaching.org/>

Women and Gender in Colonial Contexts, 19-21 January 2012, Paris, France. <http://www.sociolingo.com/2010/03/cfp-women-and-gender-in-colonial-contexts-paris-2012/#axzzI3DajwaVc>

"We Demand": History/Sex/Activism In Canada. Vancouver, British Columbia August 25-28, 2011, wedemand2011@gmail.com.

Gender and Health: Histories, May 2011. Tracy Penny Light, Sexuality, Marriage, and Family Studies/History, St. Jerome's University/University of Waterloo, tplight@uwaterloo.ca

International conference: "War in a Gender Context – Topics and Perspectives within Women's and Gender History of the First World War." 29 September - 1st October 2011. Please visit <http://www.univie.ac.at/Geschichte/Neuverortung-Geschlechtergeschichte/> for detailed information.

Many Worlds: A Personal Take on the 1960s

One of the main attractions of the 2010 OWHN conference was the keynote address by our founding chair, Dr. Alison Prentice. We were delighted to have the opportunity to see her again, now that she lives in British Columbia and her journeys back to Ontario are less frequent. As a bonus to enjoying her company, we were treated to a highly entertaining account of what it was like to be a teacher, mother, and budding feminist during the 1960s.

Alison shared stories of the various forms of sexism – sometimes blatant, but more frequently subtle and systemic – that she encountered first as a high school teacher and then as a doctoral student and university lecturer. Fortunately she could rely on her genes (coming from a long line of strong women) and her intellectual skills (honed in the woman's culture of Smith College) to assist her in navigating the obstacle

course she encountered.

However, like most women of her generation, Alison also had to chart a course that took into account the vicissitudes of matrimony and motherhood. Married to Dr. Jim Prentice, a physicist at the University of Toronto, she found herself in England during his sabbatical leave. The prospect of spending several months abroad was an exciting one, but the reality turned out to be quite different. The young wife found herself isolated in the English countryside, with two small sons in diapers, no washing machine, and a very limited support network. While the denizens of Carnaby Street may have been revelling in the "Swinging Sixties," Alison was having a personal encounter with what Betty Friedan

famously labelled "the problem that has no name."

Although she was not directly involved in the women's movement of the 1960s, Alison's experiences during that decade provided a valuable form of consciousness-raising. By the next decade, she was contributing directly to second wave feminism through her pioneering scholarship on women and education and her involvement in groups such as the Association of Women Electors.

Thanks to Alison's presentation, OWHN members were reminded once again of the enormous value of hearing the stories of women who both make and write history.

Gail Cuthbert Brandt



Alison Prentice delivers the keynote address.

Women's Worlds 2011 in Ottawa-Gatineau

Women's Worlds, an international conference held every three years that brings together scholars, activists, and community members, is coming to the Ottawa-Gatineau region in 2011. Co-organizers are Carleton University and the University of Ottawa, together with l'Université du Québec en Outaouais and Saint Paul University. Sponsors include Status of Women Canada. Visit www.womensworlds.ca for more information.



Gail Cuthbert Brandt, Chair, OWHN, introduces panel on the Voice of Women

Mark your calendars!

The OWHN 2011 Conference will be held at the Royal Military College, Kingston, ON, on the theme of women in the Canadian army and air force.

April 1-2, 2011

Stay tuned for more details soon.

*Send items for
the next*

Newsletter to:

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Minutes of the AGM, May 2010

Ontario Women's History Network, Annual General Membership Meeting, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, Toronto, May 1, 2010

Present: Gail Cuthbert Brandt, Alyson King, Alison Prentice, Julia Roberts, Sharon Anne Cook, Rose Fine-Meyer, Jan Haskings-Winner, Beth Atcheson, Paula Bourne, Jane Errington, Ursula Franklin, Tracy Penny Light, Linda Ambrose, Lorna McLean, Katherine McKenna and conference attendees.

1. Agenda. Gail Cuthbert Brandt, Chair, called the meeting to order and spoke about the changes which had taken place in the renewal of the OWHN organization and thanked everyone for attending the 2010 conference. The agenda was distributed to all present.

Approval of the Agenda: Moved by Jane Errington and seconded by Linda Ambrose. The motion was passed.

2. Business arising from the minutes. A few minor corrections were made. Jan Haskings-Winner would not continue in the position of Vice-Chair, but would remain as a member at large. There was a brief explanation of the change of the AGM meeting date from October to end of April/beginning of May as a permanent change to the OWHN AGM meeting/conference.

Approval of the minutes: moved by Julia Roberts and seconded by Jan Haskings-Winner. The motion was passed.

3. Report of the Chair. Gail Cuthbert Brandt reported that members of the executive consulted on a regular basis throughout the year via e-mail. The executive also met at OISE on Friday afternoon prior to the commencement of the 2010 conference.

Gail talked about the excellent conference

held in Ottawa in October 2009 when OWHN partnered with LEAF Ottawa to focus on the history and impact of the Person's case. She mentioned that there had not been much time to prepare for the 2010 conference since it followed so closely, but that everyone took on responsibilities to ensure that this conference was successful.

Gail thanked Tracy Penny Light for her important work getting the website set up and Gail has been trying to keep the site updated. Gail thanked Alyson King for her attractive and informative OWHN newsletter. We want to keep it going and she encouraged all OWHN members to support the newsletter by sending in material.

Gail added that she was happy to see a resurgence in the membership of OWHN and suggested the past objective of meeting twice a year had proven to be too ambitious. Therefore a combined annual conference and meeting would now be the norm for the organization. OWHN plans to alternate the conference each year: one year in Toronto, then one outside of Toronto, and then back to Toronto. The 2011 conference will take place in Kingston, Ontario in spring 2011.

Gail confirmed the two-year terms of the executive and moved that we confirm the slate of officers for 2010-11:

Chair: Gail Cuthbert Brandt, Vice-Chair: Alyson King, Treasurer: Julia Roberts, Secretary: Rose Fine-Meyer, Members at large: Jan Haskings-Winner, Linda Ambrose, and Sharon Cook.

Approval of slate of officers: moved by Jane Errington, seconded by Lorna McLean. The motion passed.

4. Treasurer's Report. Julia Roberts,

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AGM Minutes (con't)

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Treasurer, distributed the treasurer's report for the year Jan. 2009-Dec. 2009. OWHN started the year with \$1400 and ended with \$1300. Julia stated that organization handles about \$7000 a year in various activities, sponsorships, etc. Julia also added that she would provide membership receipts for those who requested them.

Approval of Treasurer's Report: moved by Rose Fine-Meyer and seconded by Jan Haskings-Winner. The motion passed.

5. New Business. Gail led a discussion about possible themes for the 2011 conference. She noted the 1941 formation of women's divisions connected to the Canadian army and air force. We might want to celebrate their achievements and bring scholars and women who were involved in various war activities together to discuss women's roles in the Second World War. It would be important to celebrate the diversity of women involved- Aboriginal women included- and also to recognize the peace movements that took place before, during, and after the war. Jane Errington kindly agreed to be the local arrangements coordinator for the 2011 conference. There were some suggestions made that we partner with other groups-women's veterans, for example – to see if we could obtain DND funding or support.

Gail also discussed ways in which we might raise our profile as an organization; for example, by issuing certificates for elementary school students who do projects about women. We could create an OWHN certificate, perhaps for grades 4-8. We would need to create clear criteria. Jan Haskings Winner indicated that there was a possibility of working with the Ontario Heritage Fairs to put such a program in place and offered to pursue it with that group. Once we decide on the criteria, we could have regional judges decide on local winners and then provide certificates-or perhaps trophies. There was a good discussion, and many were in favour of this initiative, which would provide a stronger link between OWHN and teachers and students in Ontario.

Gail suggested another option might be to introduce an undergraduate essay award for the best Women's History paper. We would have to decide on specific criteria and create a small committee to read the submissions. Perhaps it would be best if the essays were first vetted by

individual professors and then nominated. However, students could also self-nominate. There was a discussion of the pros and cons of this initiative and the ways in which professors could also be involved in the promotion of such a competition. Some individuals felt professors were already overwhelmed with essay awards and might not bother with yet another, while others gave support to the idea. The idea will be discussed further by the executive and brought back to the membership at the next annual meeting.

6. Other Business. The annual posters were discussed. Pat Station offered once again to design and publish the poster and OWHN will provide some of the financial support. There was a brief discussion about the history of the posters. It has been 20 years since the first one (March 24, 1990) was produced. Everyone showed enthusiastic support for the posters.

Gail thanked everyone for attending the AGM, and the meeting was adjourned.

Rose Fine-Meyer, Secretary.

May, 2010.

VOW (con't)

(Continued from page 1)

dressed concerns around the depiction of Native Canadians in textbooks and concerns about peace. As a relatively small group, Martha's Dundas, Ontario, chapter did not take part in many of the large, national events. In the 1980s, tension arose about where the emphasis should lie regarding nuclear disarmament: legal action or education. By the 1990s, the group was active in education about issues beyond nuclear disarmament, including sponsoring an Indian film maker, Anand Patwarden, to show his anti-nuclear film "War and Peace" in Toronto, raising money to provide toilets for girls in Kenya, and a forum on Afghanistan. Today, Martha has gone back to her roots with the group Seriously, Time to Stop, www.seriouslytimetostop.com which works to educate youth about nuclear disarmament. Martha was followed by Marie Hammond-Callahand (via Skype from Spain) who conducts historical research on the VOW. Her talk, "I don't know why these women don't stay home and tend their kitchen:' Gender Order, Communism and RCMP Surveillance of the Voice of Women, 1960-1965" provided an interesting background to the personal reflections of Ursula and Martha.