

DISTRICT 15 DIRECTOR'S REPORT 2006

PEEL REGION

BOLTON - I try not to miss a meeting at my home society, because there is always so much going on. Even though Bolton is still a small town, where we locals run into each other often at the banks, grocery stores and Tim Horton's, it is at the horticultural meetings where we really get into the gabbing! I know the rest of you act the same way when you attend your meetings. I see it everywhere I go in the District.

BRAMPTON - The Brampton AGM Pot Luck included entertainment provided by the local high school jazz ensemble - and the food was plentiful at the buffet tables. Looking around the room, I saw faces filled with contentment - fine food, good music and great company. This same positive vibe was evident at the Kids Make It and Take It Garden at the Successful Gardening show. When a society makes people of all ages feel so welcome, you know they are doing many things right!

CHINGUACOUSY - There must have been a blue moon in January when this society held its AGM. It doesn't happen very frequently among volunteer organizations, but a true election for President was held, with candidate speeches, ballots and all the excitement of choosing a new leader for the club. That as a first for me and new president Elser Lee Archer as well!



Left: Past District 15 Director **Liisa Wolfram** OHA President 2006 - 2007 wearing Chain of Office.



Right: AGM 2006 Salute to the Oscars - Hosts from Credit Valley welcome guests from Richmond Hill.



Left: Some of District 15 winning entries at OHA's 100th Convention 2006 in Ottawa

Right: District 15 Director Brenda Heenan (right) presents **OHA Award of Merit** to Martha Branigan & her daughter Shannon, accepting on behalf of ...



... **Bill & Marge Winchester** (left), parents/grandparents and long serving members of Brampton Horticultural Society.

CLOVERLEAF - I didn't get a chance to visit the society this year so I missed out on what I heard was an amazing flower show. The District Board has invited the creative designers of Cloverleaf to write the flower show design schedule for the OHA Convention being hosted by our District in 2008. The Theme is 'Sharing Our Diversity' and I imagine this could lead to some interesting classes!

CREDIT VALLEY - Who will ever forget the red carpet at the D15 AGM hosted by the society with its Salute to the Oscar theme? It was just as impressive to attend their society AGM and see Credit Valley member and OHA President Liisa Wolfgram wearing her Chain of Office! It looks good on her and doesn't seem to weigh down her sense of humour at all!

STREETSVILLE - I was very interested to see the meeting room set-up at round tables instead of rows of chairs facing front. This made it easy to talk to people and it looked like others felt the same way. A lot of friendly chatter and laughter filled the room.

TORONTO WEST

ETOBICOKE - Winter meetings can be difficult - it is dark and usually cold outside and it takes a special effort to go back out after dinner. But this year's warm January weather made for a good turnout and one member brought some flowering branches for show and tell! This led to some lively discussion with questions and answers provided by knowledgeable society members. We can learn so much from each other, and save the price of a speaker too!

PARKDALE & TORONTO - I was very happy to see Parkdale Toronto member Kathy Andrachuk, recipient of a 2006 District Appreciation Award at OHA's 100th Convention. Kathy was a member of the Toronto Horticultural Society, when it merged with Parkdale in 1972. It was terrific that she was present to represent the first horticultural society in Ontario and to receive the 100 years + certificate from the OHA.

ROSELANDS - I attended the annual Awards dinner where the entertainer got the crowd singing tunes from the war years, and more than one member was misty-eyed in remembrance. The mood soon lifted with a musical challenge - the singer hummed the gardening-related words from the songs and we tried to write them all down. It's amazing how many songs include garden-related words - Oh Canada, our home and Hmm-mm HmMMMM!

SWANSEA - Swansea hosted the September presidents meeting at the Swansea Town Hall and the hospitality (and food!) was great! Assistant Director Wendy Gay and I attended their AGM a few months later. For one of our District's smaller societies, they have accomplished a remarkable number of community projects.

WESTWAY - This society volunteered to co-host the AGM and I soon learned that President Sheila Pate's middle name is "organization"! Their society AGM included a showcase for members to display their hobbies, skills and crafts. Many of these hobbies had a horticultural theme be it toll house painting or wreath making with cones and stones.

YORK WEST

NOBLETON & KING CITY - The first Horticultural meeting I ever attended was in Nobleton about 12 years ago. The Society has that relaxed country manner I have come to know and love since moving out of the city. You always feel welcomed when you attend a Nobleton & King City meeting.

RICHMOND HILL - The society changed their awards presentation to include the history of each trophy and silver tray awarded. I could sense that the recipients felt a strong connection with the past when receiving their awards. What a wonderful way to keep the past alive and connected with the future!

SCHOMBERG - I didn't miss the Schomberg AGM and the gourmet dinner this year. It was fabulous as usual. The society has a strong community connection with the Agricultural Society and I thoroughly enjoyed the dairy farm tour they were promoting. Didn't see many flowers, but quite a few cows were named Daisy and Rose!

THORNHILL I continue to be impressed with the men and women of Thornhill, who have taken family volunteering to heart. I have seldom seen so many couples at Society meetings. When they hosted the Presidents meeting in February, the food was amazing and the kitchen helpers were of both genders. Everyone had a great time.

WOODBIDGE - Their January AGM was the same night as a terrible winter storm. Only 12 intrepid members made it to the meeting and quorum was reached only because the constitution read, "Twenty (20%) per cent of the members attending the Annual Meeting shall constitute a quorum". This probably should be changed to a more standard version of quorum, now that the society has decided to change its year end to October. Then again, it storms in November, too! Woodbridge, you made the trip through the storm worthwhile! I love it when a turn of phrase saves the day.