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I want to thank CFUW Brantford for all the thoughts and wishes I have received on the passing of my mother-in-law. It is a wonderful feeling to be so incredibly supported during such a time and I thank you all.

As I write this report I am overwhelmed and dismayed by events in Ukraine. As I watch events play out from the comfort and safety of my living room, my heart aches for the people of Ukraine. At the same time, I am amazed by how many ordinary Russians are risking their freedom to demonstrate and voice their dissent against the actions of their government. My thoughts are with those who must deal with the inhumanity of governments who make war. Such events certainly put into perspective the situation we have here in Canada and our issues with the pandemic.

As we head into the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the pandemic I look back to March 2020 and am amazed at my naivety. I was one of those people who was certain the whole thing would be over in 6 to 8 weeks. How wrong I was. This pandemic has shown Canadians at their best and, unfortunately, at their worst. Let us hope the worst is over.

For those who have wondered how our society has become so bifurcated and individuals so entrenched in their positions, that discourse is but a memory. I recommend to you the Netflix show, "The Social Dilemma". You may or may not agree with its thesis, but it provides a theory of the role of Social Media in this phenomenon. I found it fascinating.

As promised, I will provide to you, my gentle CFUW friends, a summary of what I have learned about traveling in Covid-19. My husband and I traveled to Austria to visit my 98-year-old mother-in-law, whom we had been unable to see since the commencement of the pandemic. When she passed 4 days after our return to Canada we turned around and went back. Here are the key lessons I have learned:

1. Everything takes much longer and is more complicated than pre-covid traveling.

In traveling to Austria we learned that there were few direct flights into Vienna, which meant that we not only had to determine what the criteria were for getting on the plane, and for entering Austria, but also the criteria related to any country where there was a layover. As the criteria change regularly, it is incumbent upon the traveler to keep up with the

changes. The changes are so frequent that even airline staff are having trouble keeping up. My husband at one point became so frustrated he called the Austrian Embassy in Ottawa for clarification of the entry requirements for Austria. Further, there are registrations and / or forms for just about everything from registering for a PCR test(s) to health declarations to enter a country. These forms and registrations can be a challenge to figure out the first time, so give yourself plenty of time. The ArriveCAN App is not that bad, once you figure it out, but in figuring it out I did say some very bad words.

The registration for the random testing at Pearson was not well "advertised" and on the two occasions I was pulled over for the testing, the lines were chaotic, with the majority of travelers not having pre-registered. Luckily, I was registered. Unluckily, I was in the midst of a super-spreader event.

2. Flights are being rearranged and canceled with regularity, so check airline websites with regularity.

Twice our flights were re-arranged prior to leaving for Austria. Our initial return flight was changed about 3 weeks before our departure --- it was a variation we could live with. However, 5 days prior to our departure I went on the airline website to ensure I knew how to maneuver it for electronic check in, only to find our flight to Austria was missing and we were now on a flight that left 4 days after our booked flight. The next day I called my travel agent (and I do recommend having a travel agent in these times for assistance) and neither she nor we had been notified of the change. As a result, she had to find new flights for us, cancel the original flights, and apply for our money back (which we did get).

When we were at airports at least a 1/5th of the flights on the boards were canceled. With connecting flights there is a risk that your flight will be one of those canceled. In chatting with airline staff the main reason for the cancellations was not having enough staff due to staff having Covid-19 or Covid-19 exposures. Given that I am opposed to sleeping in airports (just too old for that) I wanted to be able to leave the airport should a flight be canceled, which is why it is so important to be able to meet the entry criteria for any country you may be in for a lay-over.

Luckily, after our initial issues, we had no re-scheduled or canceled flights; however, we were prepared for an unexpected hotel stay in either Munich or Amsterdam.

3. Read the fine print related to the Covid-19 regulations in the country you are visiting.

For example, in a country where you need to be vaccinated, ensure you check to see if fully vaccinated is 2 or 3 doses. In Austria it was 3 doses and with only 2 doses there was a quarantine period.

Also, know what vaccines have been approved in the country you plan to visit. In Austria, Germany and the Netherlands, the approved vaccines were the same ones that we receive in Canada. However, this may not be the case everywhere. I witnessed a situation at a Hotel in Semmering, Austria where two young men had arrived in Austria from Hungary. The vaccines they had received were not approved in Austria, and they could not stay at the hotel.

Know the masking requirements--- for example when we were in Austria only KN95s or N95s were acceptable and you would be denied entry to indoor venues with a cloth or regular medical mask. Know how to get a PCR/Covid-19 test that is acceptable for travel in Canada (when leaving) or to get back into the country before you leave your destination (if such are going to be required moving forward).

4. Consider what happens if you get Covid-19 when away.

No matter how careful we are, there is always a risk of getting Covid-19, whether here or when traveling. Consider then how you will pay for the unexpected extension of your stay in a different country (or in another part of Canada) if you get Covid-19 and cannot return home. I bought insurance to help cover such unexpected costs, from accommodation, to food, to the costs of changing flights. I also double checked that my health insurance covered my medical expenses if I were to get Covid-19 and require medical care while out of Canada (yes, so long as I am double vaxxed).

5. To quote Bobby McFerrin ----Don't Worry, Be Happy ---- if you are going to travel in Covid-19 be as chill as Bobby. In travel anything can happen and Covid-19 has simply expanded on the "adventure" that is travel.

Respectfully submitted,  
Betsy C.



## SCHOLARSHIP MATTERS

### Centenary Scholarship 2019

2019 marked the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the founding of IFUW-CFUW, organizations of women formed after WW 1, in part, to promote peace and understanding among people (not governments) in diverse countries. Peace now seems like such a naive goal as we are now watching in horror, 103 years later, the attempted destruction of peace in Ukraine, wondering how can this be happening?? Meanwhile, in 2018, CFUW National encouraged its member clubs to develop a one-time Scholarship Award to be awarded during 2019 to mark the important anniversary. CFUW Brantford, and particularly the Scholarship Committee took on the last-minute challenge to develop an Award. With the help and support of the Executive, the Committee set an objective of \$1000 and encouraged members to donate generously to achieve this goal.

The Centenary Award Criteria were created to recognize the abilities and potentials of a graduating female student who was planning to pursue a post-secondary education. Each Brant County Secondary School Student Services Department was advised of the criteria and invited to nominate 1 student. The CFUW Scholarship Committee was responsible for the final selection.

This project was a wonderful success story: our club members contributed well above the objective of \$1000.00 and the winner, B.C.I. student Avery Kadis, is so musically talented that, even before her high school graduation, she had performed at Roy Thomson Hall, Koerner Hall, and the Toronto and Newport Jazz Festivals. She expressed her appreciation to us by performing a beautiful piano selection at our 2019 AGM. Both Avery and her family were very grateful for this Award money to help Avery attend Humber College in Etobicoke, to major in Music Performance. She has since presented a concert at the Sanderson Centre in the fall of 2021; we expect to have more opportunities to hear beautiful music from this talented young woman. Brenda M.

Donations accepted most gratefully for the Scholarship Fund since we didn't have a fundraising event this year. Naomi K.

## Follow-up to the Maple Arbor Scholarship

In February Pat C. contacted Margaret Dewitt, the niece of Helen Howell to update her as to the end of the Maple Arbor Scholarship and to inform her of the gift and its importance. Helen's niece replied as follows:

Thank you very much for letting me know about the demise of Aunt Helen's Maple Arbor Scholarship fund. It's not surprising that the funds were depleted after some 40 years of assisting many, many students. Aunt Helen would be pleased and proud to know that her influence continued long after her death in 1982.

I appreciate receiving a copy of the newsletter in which Aunt Helen's history at Maple Arbor Farm is outlined, along with her plans to establish the lecture series. I'll make a copy of the newsletter, and keep it with the family history documents.

Marg.

# Updates

## Chair of Advocacy



Every Club reviews CFUW National Resolutions in March-April. Our Club always has lots of people willing to review the Resolutions and make recommendations to the membership. So that part is easy.

As Chair of Advocacy, you and your committee can identify anything that you would like to focus on from an All Candidates meeting to meeting with MPPs and MPs, attendance at local events such as Take Back the Night or simply ensuring that our Club votes on any National Resolutions.

You could easily co-Chair with a friend. Please contact Norah O'L or Lin F if you would like to discuss further.

## Membership

Thank you so much, members, for staying with our organization through the second Covid -19 year. With the help of technology, we were able to enjoy virtual Executive, General Meetings and most Interest Groups.

I will be sending out the membership forms soon. **The fee remains the same for 2022-2023.**

Please also complete the Interest Group section. Thank you to the leaders of Interest Groups who have offered to volunteer their time. There have been some changes to the groups so please make note of them as you complete the form.

We hope to be turning to a hybrid model of "live" attendance and online in April, but let's see how things go. More information to come.

Respectfully, Dian K.

### CALLING ALL VOLUNTEERS FOR AN ALL CANDIDATES MEETING Prior to the June 2, 2022 Provincial Election

Appealing opportunity for those of you who like short term commitments to run an all-candidates meeting to help our community to get to know the candidates running in the June 2, 2022 provincial election. The Retired Teachers of Ontario are once more interested in supporting this venture. In the past, there was always a great team with many hands and the former notes are available. But first, we need a Captain. Please let any member of the Executive, or Brenda M., know by Friday March 25, if you can take this on.

## Report on CFUW National Workshop on Afghanistan

2007-2008 CFUW Brantford took part in **Breaking Bread for Women in Afghanistan**, a volunteer fundraising project to support education for Afghan women and girls by holding potluck dinners. The money raised was used to support teachers' salaries in Afghanistan through established Afghan project partners working with CW4WAfghan (Canadian Women for Women in Afghanistan). CW4WAfghan was part of the panel at the workshop **Safe Exit and Resettlement in Canada – Unfinished Business in Afghanistan** hosted by CFUW National on January 27<sup>th</sup>. They shared the stage or, in this case, the screen with Hassan Soroosh, the Afghan Ambassador in Canada, Tim Laidler from the Veterans Transition Network, and Victoria Jahesh from the Afghan Women's Centre in Montreal. The panel was moderated by Kalidi Nasari from Young Afghans in Canada. It was a most informative workshop. Much frustration was expressed about the process of supporting Afghans and especially those who supported Canada in Afghanistan. Ideas were shared for what Canadians can do:

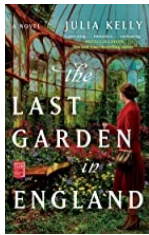
- Inform ourselves and spread awareness (knowing facts and sharing them).
- Donate to organizations like those represented at the workshop.
- Send strong messages of sympathy and commitment to combat a growing sense of abandonment that many Afghans feel.
- Help with advocacy efforts of Civil Society Organizations in Afghanistan.
- Support online education and scholarship programs.
- Help support the humanitarian efforts in Afghanistan.
- Like posts on social media on the issue. It reminds decision makers that the issue is important to people.
- Join CW4WAfghan's efforts calling on Canada to focus on securing and expanding options for Afghans to safely exit Afghanistan.
- Check the Advocacy tab on their website (<https://cw4wafghan.ca>) for five calls to action (recommendations to Immigration, Refugee, Citizenship Canada).



Submitted by Mieke S.

## INTERESTS

**Thursday Evening Book Club:** The February choice by the Thursday Book Club was **The Last Garden in England** by Julia Kelly (historical fiction). This book tells the story of three different generations of women who were architects of the famed Highbury House estate in Warwickshire England in the early 1900's, in the 1940s during the war when the house was requested as a convalescent hospital, and the present day. Class, motherhood, ambition, relationships, and women's roles play a significant role in each of the time periods. It tells of strong women and how they navigated life in these eras. This book will appeal to gardeners and followers of Downton Abbey. Dian K.



**Creative Cookery Group:** On February 16, a few of us from Creative Cooking kept in touch via ZOOM. It was fun to see everyone and we shared interesting conversations just about anything that came to mind. March 16 we will "meet" again on ZOOM to celebrate St. Patrick's Day! Let's wear GREEN and share a recipe too! Jean L.

**Games Group:** Here is the schedule that we had set up for the rest of this year:

Schedule: Always second Thursday at 1:30pm  
March 10, April 14, May 12, June 9. Marsha S.

**Monday Evening Book Group: Under the Sky We Make** by Dr. Kimberly Nicholas

This book is an accessible narrative of why our climate is changing, the broader ecological and social impacts of that change, concluding with the message that we have personal agency and opportunity to make a difference - and we do have to. Or in her own words "It's warming. It's us. We're sure. It's bad. But we can fix it." What we need to do, though, was not a message easily received by all of us, despite the broad agreement on the need to act. Big changes in how we travel, what we eat and how we approach consumerism matter. Every incremental step towards that change is an important one and it starts with conversation. Marjorie S.

**Dining Out Group:** The group is venturing forth to an event at the Sanderson Centre that is not Dining Out, but is a start to getting out together as a group. The Mush Hole is an interpretive dance event created by Santee Smith. It is set for Wednesday, March 30, 7:00 p.m. Lin F.

**Walking Group:** Several members saw the deer around 9:45 a.m. at Waterworks Park. Then at 10:15 a.m. another group of members met up at Glenhyrst. The two short walks were well worth it. Nora O.



**Monday Afternoon Bridge Group:** We continued online Bridge with only 8 players this time. Thanks to Anne M. and Catherine S. for setting up the tables. We are hoping for in-person playing in the very near future. Stay tuned. Brenda M.



**World Awareness Group:** The World Awareness group has been meeting monthly by Zoom on the third Monday. There are so many events in this current world of ours that there is always more than one topic of interest to discuss. And this group does enjoy discussing. Jennifer D.



Many CFUW friends have reached out to me, asking how they can help the people of Ukraine in the current terrible situation. If you wish to donate, the charity I would recommend is the Canada Ukraine Foundation:

<https://www.cufoundation.ca/>

People in Ukraine have asked me to amplify their voices on social media because a lot of their own posts are being blocked. In particular, Olya Onysko, a filmmaker in Ukraine has asked me to spread this video widely. It's children themselves from all over Ukraine, in bomb shelters talking about what their life is like right now. I would appreciate it if you would consider watching it, and perhaps even sharing:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/100001614888883/videos/1147625242737794/>

With sincere thanks,  
Marsha S.



The **Brantford Symphony Orchestra's Book Fair Committee** announces with regret that their annual in-person sale, scheduled for April this year will not take place due to ongoing concerns with the effects of the pandemic. In

place of an in-person sale in April the committee is planning another on-line auction. This will take place April 22 through April 30. The auction will offer books and music items which will be available to view on-line starting April 9. Unfortunately, we are not accepting book donations right now. We are filled with books in preparation for our online auction in April. Starting mid-May, we will have lots of room for new donations (once bidders pick up their boxes of books). For more information, please check the website at:

[www.brantfordsymphony.ca](http://www.brantfordsymphony.ca) .



## 2021 –2022 EXECUTIVE

### PRESIDENT IN NAME:

- Elizabeth Capitano

### PAST PRESIDENT:

- Brenda Malvern

### ROTATING PRESIDENTIAL TEAM:

- Elizabeth Capitano
- Lin Fines
- Maria Timmons
- Adrienne Roberts
- Anne Martin
- Catherine Sawyer
- Bev Golden
- Jenny DeAlwis

**SECRETARY:** Gay Henley

**TREASURER:** Maria Timmons

### STANDING COMMITTEE CHAIRS:

- Advocacy:** Elizabeth Capitano
- Communications:** Sandra Hughes
- Interest Groups:** Jane Binkley
- Membership:** Dian Kuzyk
- Program:** Anne Martin
- Scholarship:** Naomi Kral
- Social:** Rotating

## March Special Days:

March 17:  March 20: 

**Well Done!** Having read the February newsletter just now, I feel I must thank all of you who have contributed to it. It is a most interesting read, not just for the always enjoyable personal items, but for the lengthy articles on the current state of the world, Black-History month, Long -Term Care, Anne Hodge, and other topics. I know that I have not mentioned a few other contributors, but hope I have recognized those who put a lot of work into their contributions. Thank you again, Colette



**General Meeting:** March 23, 2022

Look for an email with the Zoom link to join.

Meeting Starts at 7:00 p.m.

Program Speaker for March

Motivation sensation, best-selling author, coach and entrepreneur extraordinaire, **Rosita Hall**, will be the speaker for the March meeting.



### Congratulations:

Kay and Sep R. joyfully announce the birth of their Grandbaby, Kathryn Lumi Estella Ruuska MacKay .... to be called Kit.



Condolences to Nora F., who's son-in-law passed away.

**RESOLUTIONS:** Please join advocacy on Monday , March 21, 2022 , @ 7 pm , by Zoom, to discuss this year's resolutions, which can be reviewed by clicking the links below. For those who wish to comment on the resolutions but cannot make the meeting, please forward to Betsy C. any comments and suggestions you have and they will be presented to the group for discussion.

[Archiving Selected Policies I – CFUW Advocacy Committee](#)

[Archiving Selected Policies II – CFUW Advocacy Committee](#)

[Strengthening Employment Equity - CFUW Nelson & District Tightening Bail](#)

[Laws to Protect Victims of Intimate Partner Violence – UWC North York](#)

[Violence against Women in Politics – CFUW Oakville - Clean, Healthy & Sustainable Environment is a Human Right – CFUW Headwaters](#)

[Respectfully, Betsy C.](#)

## AGM – May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2022

We are pleased to announce that plans are firming up (Covid-19 always lurking) for an in person Banquet this May.

Preliminary information:

CFUW Brantford May Banquet

May 25, 2022, from 4 – 8 p.m.

Brantford Golf and Country Club

Buffet dinner

Ticket price \$60

Further information will follow.

Submitted by your Social Committee



*Dynamic Women Can Make a Difference*