

**Miramichi Area Retired Teachers' Association (MARTA)**  
**Annual Branch Summary Report for 2017 – 2018**

Following the excitement, anticipation and detailed planning during the previous year, in preparation to host the 2017 NBSRT Biennial, the activity level of the MARTA Branch this year was significant, but definitely flowed at a more placid, regular pace. Overall, it has been a good year for our branch members.

The year kicked-off with our annual branch End-of-Summer / Welcome Back Breakfast, held at the Portage Restaurant, Tuesday, September 5<sup>th</sup>, with a very significant turnout of members.

The second branch breakfast, the Spring Breakfast, was hosted at the Miramichi Kin Centre, on Thursday, April 5<sup>th</sup>. This was done in order to accommodate the newly established policy for the NBSRT Executive election and to entice members out to both vote and socialize over a meal. This is a significant milestone in the history of NBSRT and a paradigm shift whereby all provincial members have an opportunity to vote, and an occasion whereby the MARTA Executive wished to involve the participation of many of its members.

In her legendary efficient manner and as she has done for many, many years, Cil Hickey, MARTA Social Chairperson, organized, scheduled and hosted the MARTA Games Afternoons for the following dates: September 12<sup>th</sup>, October 10<sup>th</sup>, November 14<sup>th</sup>, January 9<sup>th</sup>, February 13<sup>th</sup>, March 13<sup>th</sup>, April 10<sup>th</sup> and May 08<sup>th</sup>. Only 2 of the planned dates had to be cancelled: October 10<sup>th</sup>, due to funeral of a member and March 13<sup>th</sup>, due to inclement weather.

Cil also provided attention-to-detail in planning branch breakfasts, in addition to the MARTA Fall AGM / Dinner hosted at St. Raphael's Church Hall, in Blackville, Thursday, October 19<sup>th</sup> and the MARTA Spring AGM / Dinner to be held and hosted at St. Andrews' United Church, Miramichi, Tuesday, May 15<sup>th</sup>.

The Fall AGM on October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2017, was an event of great surprise, honour and humility for the collective membership of MARTA, when June MacNairn, First Vice President of NBSRT, presented the entire branch with an NBSRT Certificate of Merit for an outstanding job in having planned and hosted the 2017 NBSRT Spring Biennial, May 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup>. It was a generous and kind reassurance to know that those members who had attended the Biennial 2017 generally enjoyed themselves and had a positive experience, as we earnestly had wished. (If only we could have planned and controlled the weather for our guests!)

All of the MARTA Executive meetings were held at the Portage Restaurant on the following dates: Tuesday, October 03<sup>rd</sup> (Special Guests: Jocelyn Schwenger, President of Bathurst Branch and June MacNairn, First Vice-President of NBSRT re: Ideas and incentives to increase membership, provincially.); Wednesday, February 14<sup>th</sup> (Special Guest: Dale MacRae re: NBSRT Election Procedures and Protocols) and the final meeting of the year, scheduled Wednesday

May 9<sup>th</sup> (Planning meeting re: finalizing details of the Spring AGM / Dinner and the 2018 2019 MARTA Calendar.)

New Membership Incentives: During July of 2017, individualised letters were sent to each, new retiree in the MARTA catchment area of ASD-N, along with an NBSRT registration form and a list of benefits of being a member, encouraging them to join. During January, the 2018 NBTA pre-retirement workshop for teachers of ASD-N was hosted in Bathurst. After discussion with Jocelyne Schwenger, Bathurst Branch President, she kindly agreed to attend the workshop and speak briefly to those teachers in attendance. She distributed registration forms along with a list of benefits of being a member of NBSRT, as cited from a recent edition of Reflections. She encouraged them to give serious consideration to this very worthwhile endeavour. Sincere thanks to Mike Ketchum of NBTA for working Jocelyne's brief presentation into an already packed agenda.

On April 4<sup>th</sup>, this spring, an invitation was extended by NBSRT President, Marg Urquhart, to all branch presidents requesting their attendance at the NBTA Provincial Luncheon for New Retirees, Saturday, May 26<sup>th</sup>, in Fredericton. The intent: to have branch presidents meet the new retirees of their respective branches and to encourage new membership into the very worthwhile organization of NBSRT.

Wellness: the last major initiative to report upon. When this portfolio became a provincial priority during the fall of 2017, as per the request of the provincial chairpersons to have a branch representative to spearhead this mandate, MARTA member Lois Gilliss kindly accepted the invitation to serve as MARTA Wellness chair, attend provincial planning meetings in Fredericton and to establish a local Wellness committee. To these ends, Lois and her committee have done a spectacular job! This newly established and important working group has accomplished a great deal, during a brief span of time, with the intent to have branch members reflect on the concept and tenets of wellness and to become involved in the design and participation of activities appealing to them. The committee conducted a well designed 10 question action-based survey on wellness, which was distributed to members for completion at the Spring Breakfast, April 5<sup>th</sup>. Results will be used to guide and formulate priority wellness activities for branch members. The MARTA members definitely stand in good stead, on a go-forward basis, regarding wellness initiatives, thanks to Lois and her committee members.

As I stated initially in the opening of this report, the 2017-2018 calendar year was somewhat more tranquil than the previous year for the MARTA Branch; nonetheless, it still was a very active and productive one for its members. Next year, the spring of 2019 will see MARTA electing a new slate of officers to serve on its Executive, when my term concludes and Grant Hendry assumes the role of Branch President, 2019 -2021. Looking ahead, it is my sincere hope that among the current two-hundred-fifty-seven active members of our branch many will give

serious consideration to running for a position-of-office or of serving on one of the numerous working committees so very crucial to the continuous operation of our branch. It is through the collective ingenuity and effort of many and the creative ideas brought forth by new individuals which keep our branch humming along like a finely tuned machine.

Wishing the Executive of NBSRT and all of the provincial membership of the 10 respective branches a safe and enjoyable summer!

Respectfully submitted,

Andy

**Andrew L. Clark, President of MARTA, 2017 -2019**