

# FROM 6 TO 60



## THE YEAR 1968 WAS HISTORIC IN SO MANY WAYS

Simon & Garfunkel released the original soundtrack to *The Graduate*, which quickly went to #1 on the pop charts.



Rowan & Martin's *Laugh-In* debuted on NBC.



Canada became officially bilingual.



Between 350 and 500 Vietnamese villagers were killed by American troops in the My Lai massacre during the Vietnam War.



Martin Luther King Jr. and U.S. presidential candidate Robert F. Kennedy were assassinated.



Montreal was awarded a major league baseball franchise that became the Montreal Expos.



The Soviet Union invaded Czechoslovakia.



The laws creating Canada's medicare system came into effect.



The Beatles released *Hey Jude*.



The stage musical *Hair* opened in London.



Richard Nixon became president of the United States and Pierre Trudeau, prime minister of Canada.



The crew of Apollo 8 entered into orbit around the moon, becoming the first humans to do so.

*The Retired Teachers of Ontario celebrates its 40th anniversary in 2008 and goes from 6,000 to 60,000 active members in 40 years*

For retired teachers across the province, 1968 was historic as their official voice was born with the creation of the Superannuated Teachers of Ontario (STO/ERO), which in 1998 became The Retired Teachers of Ontario/les enseignantes et enseignants retraités de l'Ontario, commonly known as RTO/ERO.

For the past 40 years, RTO/ERO has established a tradition of excellence by providing quality programs and services for retired members of the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan, including principals, vice-principals and other retired members of the educational community, such as university and college faculty, and school and board office support staff. RTO/ERO is an inclusive organization as it welcomes educator retirees from elementary and secondary, English and French, and public and Catholic school systems.

RTO/ERO is proud of its roots, established under the aegis of the Ontario Teachers' Federation (OTF) in reaction to the introduction of the Canada Pension Plan (CPP) on January 1, 1966 and its impact on retired teachers. The provincial government decided that this pension should not be stacked on top of pensions to which the Ontario government contributed and which it guaranteed.

At an OTF meeting, then secretary Nora Hodgins expressed concern about the potential impact of the CPP and lamented to colleague and later first president of STO/ERO, Arthur McAdam that the superannuated teachers were not organized. She believed that if they were, their numbers and expertise could be combined with OTF to persuade the government to do something for those educators who had taught on low salaries and now had low pensions.

McAdam agreed and spelled out to Hodgins and members recruited from the affiliates, a plan for the organization of the superannuated teachers. As a result, by motion of the OTF Executive, he was instructed to form a committee and proceed to organize the group. McAdam formed a committee of ten and OTF adopted it as one of its committees, paid its expenses and let it use OTF's facilities.

A letter approved by OTF was sent to all superannuated teachers stating the purpose, the form of a proposed constitution and the objectives for such an organization. The letter asked each person to submit the name of a retired teacher who had been a member

of that person's former affiliate and who consented to be nominated for election to an organization of retired teachers.

In the fall of 1966 this letter was mailed to every superannuated teacher in Ontario asking if they agreed with the founding of an organization to represent them and if they were willing to pay a fee to help run the organization. Eighty-five per cent said yes and thus STO/ERO was born in 1968.

STO/ERO-RTO/ERO was created out of a need to work for the betterment of teacher pensions. This principle is still upheld by the organization and has been promoted aggressively over the past 40 years when financially and politically feasible to do so. However, RTO/ERO has expanded to offer so much more.

Foremost amongst RTO/ERO programs is its comprehensive, competitive and affordable health plans, owned and managed by its members. It is the largest retiree educator health plan in Canada and the favoured choice of retired Ontario educators with over 40,000 of RTO/ERO's 60,000 members enrolled. Government-sponsored health care is supplemented by a non-aged banded plan, meaning that the same fees or premiums are paid by RTO/ERO members for the chosen service, whether one is 55, 75, 95 or even 105 years old, covering the age range of our members from 51 to 106 years old.

RTO/ERO advocates on a variety of political and social issues on behalf of its members and seniors in general. At the provincial and local levels we constantly "knock on government doors" by meeting with party leaders, members of the provincial parliament and members of parliament, as appropriate. RTO/ERO advocates

for all seniors in areas such as health care, the environment and current value assessment. In the recent past our political successes include income trusts, PSA tests and pension income splitting.

Through its district structure, RTO/ERO provides social and networking opportunities for its members, including travel excursions, recreational activities such as golf tournaments, and leadership opportunities. In fact across the 45 districts in Ontario and two in British Columbia, there are over 800 members who volunteer as district executive members, assuming liaison responsibilities with provincial committees, acting as goodwill ambassadors to our less able senior members and lobbying on issues that have a local, provincial or national impact.

RTO/ERO is a caring and compassionate organization that provides goodwill support to members and philanthropic programs to benefit members, their families and their communities. Our members are also involved in a myriad of community volunteer activities. RTO/ERO encourages and, in some instances, financially supports such activities at home and abroad by annually allocating \$100,000 to worthy community-based projects supported by districts.

From its humble beginnings in 1968 with 6,000 members to 40 years later in 2008 with over 60,000 members, The Retired Teachers of Ontario has stayed true to its mandate of providing quality programs and services. As a voluntary, bilingual organization and one of the largest of its kind in the world, RTO/ERO works hard, ensuring that benefits in retirement for its members will be "Here for you Now...Here for your Future."



### HIGHLIGHTS FROM RTO/ERO'S 40-YEAR HISTORY

- The first senate, RTO/ERO's governing body, is held with 22 people on March 14, 1968 in the boardroom of the Ontario Public School Men Teachers' Federation on 1260 Bay Street, Toronto. Since then 73 Senates (two a year) have been held.
- In the 1970s, the then STO/ERO works: to establish a minimum pension of \$1400 rather than \$600; to increase all pensions in force by 2% times the number of years the pension had been in force; and to insert an escalation clause into the Superannuation Act. This last clause is realized on September 1, 1975 when the Superannuation Adjustment Fund allowing for the annual escalation of pensions comes into effect. The legislation ensures teachers who retired before 1975 have pensions escalated with the full cost carried by the government.
- Health service begins with a health plan through Co-Operative Health Service in 1969 with an agreement. Today more than 65,000 members and their dependents are part of the RTO/ERO owned health plans managed by Johnson Inc. since 1984.
- In the early 1980s the government enacts Bill 148, an amendment to the Teachers' Superannuation Act (TSA), which includes that pensions after May 31, 1982 will be based on the best five years. STO works for the rest of the 1980s to convince the government to base all pensions on the best five years of teaching service.
- In 1998 The Superannuated Teachers of Ontario (STO/ERO) becomes The Retired Teachers of Ontario/ Les enseignantes et enseignants retraités de l'Ontario.
- In 1999 RTO/ERO moves from 1260 Bay Street to its new home at 18 Spadina Road, owned by the organization.