

*International Women's Day,
March 8th, 2014*

BATTLES WON SINCE W.W ONE

2014 marks 100 years since the beginning of the 1st World War. In retrospect of this historical event, we can reflect on battles which have been won, both during and because of the Great War. Specifically, when the 1st World War began, women in Canada were not permitted to vote and weren't yet recognized as persons. Women were not yet permitted control over their own reproductive bodies; just a few decades before WW1 women were expected to not speak of reproduction. It may seem like distant history to some, but it is neither distant and not entirely history.

The desperation of the war led to desperate measures, resulting in the roles and experiences of women changing as they were needed to replace men in the work force. This sampling of independence, options and self-value inspired even those whom didn't see themselves as able and deserving to take up the fight for their right to vote, which came in 1919, and to be recognized as a person, which occurred in 1929. Women battled to have a say and a place in personal, social and legal issues both at home and nationally. The First World War ignited women on many fronts upon the infectious realization they had made a contribution to the front.

A significant change for women in the past 100 years came with access to contraception. 2014 marks 100 years since the term "birth control" was coined. The term is mainstream, today (www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com). Prior to the availability of contraception, women were

immensely susceptible to the consequences of an unplanned pregnancy in a way men obviously were not impacted. Hence, the women's role was predictably established early in life. Married women, prior to birth control, did not have the freedom of choice women have now and unmarried women were shunned. With the ability to control reproduction a woman achieved the opportunity to enter and maintain a place in the work force, to gain social and economic independence, and therefore, develop a confidence and a voice to add to their vote. With the topic of women's rights at times feeling tired, it is difficult to imagine what immense battles have been won in the past 100 years. What has really happened is a one hundred year battle to get where we are today, and the war is not yet won. One area that is currently news worthy is pay equity. The provincial government recently responded with a small increase to minimum wage. Women are 60% of the minimum wage earners and many of these women are single parents. "Although it has improved, at this rate, women still have to work an additional 13 years to earn the same pay as men earn by age 65." (Mary Cornish, www.thestar.com/news/canada/2013/04/09/ontario_gender_pay_gap_inspires_call_for_equal_pay_day.print.html). There are laws to promote pay equity, yet there is still a pay gap of 72% working against women. Poverty is a leading cause of health problems for women, and leaves children vulnerable. It compounds the impact of domestic violence on women and children. These few social concerns illustrate that although the last 100 years have many battles won for women, the war on equality still rages on.

Article Contribution from PIT/MSP Staff Member Rainy Chappell, 2014.



NEWSLETTER Spring 2014

OPERATIONS UPDATE

People in Transition (Alliston) Inc. "My Sister's Place" is pleased to announce that keeping in line with the ongoing Strategic Plan, and to aid in addressing the recognized lack of affordable housing in our community, a two unit self-sufficient income property was purchased in October, 2013. The first family commenced leasing in January, 2014. We thank the contributors of the designated fund for this long awaited project.

The need for affordable housing is not a local issue for women and children at risk. The Ontario Association of Interval & Transition Houses has included in their latest recommendations to the Ontario government budget committee to address this need. *"The most significant pressure on the shelter and for the woman herself is the length of stay in a shelter because of a lack of affordable and accessible housing. A woman and her children may be on a wait list for housing, but have to return to an abusive situation if there is no housing available."*
<http://www.oaith.ca/action/action-now/>

The annual fundraising target to meet the organization's budget shortfall is \$123,000 for the fiscal year of April 1st to March 31st, 2014. As of January 31st, we have reached \$83,000 of this fundraising goal.

Upcoming Events:

May 24th – Beeton Honey Festival
June 21st – Community Road Tolls
July 2-6th – Tottenham Community Week
August 9th – Alliston Potato Festival

Contact Information

Administration (705) 435-9400

Crisis Telephone (705) 435-3835
Collect Calls Accepted

Toll Free Anytime 1-800-461-5419

www.mysistersplace.ca



www.facebook.com/AllistonMySistersPlace



https://twitter.com/MSP_Alliston

Many Thanks to Our Community Supporters

Over the Holiday Season we received many donations in the form of cash, gift cards, food, toys and services which were shared directly with the families who rely on the shelter's services. On behalf of the recipients, PIT/MSP thanks those community businesses, schools, churches, service clubs, sports teams and individuals who put the women and children of the shelter on their seasonal giving list.

We are always working to build relationships within the south Simcoe area. Please call us if you are planning a third party event on the shelter's behalf so that we may assist in publicizing it.

Without your ongoing support
we cannot operate. THANK YOU!