



Unitarian House – We call it home
Maison unitarienne - C'est notre chez-nous

About Us

A Newsletter for Friends of Unitarian House



Spring/Summer 2016

A word from the Executive Director

“The Power of Hope”

The definition of hope is to look forward with confidence or expectation. To believe that events will turn out for the best. Well for the last two years we have been living in hope that city officials, politicians and anyone involved in pushing the Western Light Rail through the front yard of Unitarian House will see that there will be significant health risks for the residents of Unitarian House.

We have informed the people in charge that it will not be possible to mitigate those risks given the nature of health problems of the octogenarians who reside at Unitarian House.

We have not given up hope and have been blessed to have experts like Dr. Marie-France Tourigny-Rivard, Geriatric psychiatrist (Founder) and other health care experts write letters and send us their research supporting our concerns. Giving up might have been less stressful, less work but we have never given up on our belief that the health of our seniors can not be mitigated. So a special thank you to David Curry for his leadership, for never giving up and for inspiring us to live in hope that we can win.

Thank you for your support,

Christina O'Neil
Executive Director



Our annual spring fundraising dinner is just around the corner. Our guest speaker will be Mary Cook, distinguished Ottawa Valley author and story teller. There will be a silent auction, a lovely meal and friendly stories shared.

Save the date:

May 3rd 2015

Reception at 6 p.m. Dinner at 7 p.m.

Tickets \$130 with a \$100 tax receipt.

Come join us!

Please call Jessica at 613-722-6690 or e-mail retire@unitarianhouse.ca for reservations



Mary Cook Guest Speaker

Mary Cook was born and raised in the Ottawa Valley. She was a broadcast journalist with CBC for more than 48 years.

She continues to write for many newspapers and magazines. She is considered one of Eastern Ontario's most prolific writer, folklorist and historian.

Her wonderful stories of growing up on an Ottawa Valley farm in Renfrew County during the Depression years have turned into twelve Canadian Best Sellers.

She is equally at home amongst both urban and rural communities. She is well known for the hours she spends visiting nursing homes

throughout Eastern Ontario and Western Quebec. Mary has been happily married to Walley for 64 years and they have three children and five grandchildren. They live in Carleton Place, Ontario.

The Power of Music

A bright light appeared at Unitarian House in mid-December 2015. Her name is Marley Giunta. She brought with her a love of music, infinite patience, a kind heart and her guitar. Marley received an arts grant from Arts Place. Her goal was to inspire older adults to share their musical gifts and interest.

Marley grew up in a musical family. No TV, just music in every room. Her grandfather sang tenor, her sister and brother-in-law are opera singers. Music surrounded her.



Marley Giunta and Andy Pritchard at Unitarian House

Marley's Success

An example of the success of Marley's musical nights was the enjoyment of seeing Andy Pritchard pull his violin from under the bed and join the group. He had not played for 30 years. Every Tuesday was a bright spot in his week.

The enjoyment was evident in the smiles of others who came to sing along. Within 4 weeks Marley had a following.

Research shows that music stimulates the mind, as well as the spirit. What a wonderful way to spend a cold winter's night.

We thank you Marley for your kindness and inspiration.

- Liz Pritchard



Marley Giunta

Art Place Grant Program 2015/16



Extra Extra! This just in!

**The Retirement Floor
Waiting List is still open!**

As you drive along Richmond Road you will find Unitarian House tucked away in a unique location. We have the best of both worlds, beautiful scenery in a quiet country setting close to all of the amenities.

Building on our solid reputation of being a retirement home that cares we pride ourselves on being able to offer our community a continuum of twenty-four hour registered nursing care, nutritious meals, an in-house Physio program and a variety of activities in an affordable home like setting. If you are no longer interested in cooking, cleaning or doing laundry and would like to be a part of this active community please give Jessica a call at 613-722-6690 or e-mail retire@unitarianhouse.ca

*Does not include Independent Living Apartments



Audrey Barbara Weller (*nee Montague*)



March 16, 1923 – January 16, 2016
Audrey passed away peacefully in her sleep at 92 years of age.

One of a Kind

Born in the heart of London England, Audrey led a full and adventurous life through remarkable times. WWII disrupted her training as a dressmaker and at age 18, she was assigned to war work in London. Through those dark days, Audrey sang in *Arthur Forest's* big band in the evenings, ignoring her mother's strict curfew. Her brother in law was the band leader and had Audrey's voice trained at her request. On VE day, Audrey played the piano in the streets and sang along with the crowds.

Hedley (Ed), a fellow Londoner, with the British Air force, met Audrey singing with Mr. Forest's band. Married in 1948, spare time was spent travelling the English countryside on a motorbike with a pup tent, teapot and friends. Four years later, they travelled to Canada by boat on the Cunard Line, tickets and two fur coats purchased with Audrey's winnings from the Irish sweepstakes. Originally, planning to go to New Zealand, they instead immigrated to Canada, stopping in Toronto where Ed had an offer to work on the Avro Arrow. They put down roots. With their love of travel, over the years Audrey and Ed explored their new country from coast to coast, kids in tow.

Like so many of her generation, the war years shaped Audrey's character to one of resilience, industry and compassion. A skilled seamstress in dressmaking, tailoring and needlework, she was rarely without work or a project on the go. In her later years, membership was enjoyed with the Etobicoke Quilters and Heritage Rug Crafters guilds. Time spent with her grandchildren brought great joy and lots of laughter.

In 2007, Audrey reluctantly moved to Unitarian House, after months of rehab for a fall which broke her hip and fractured her pelvis. Deeply attached her home of 52 years and her independence, it was a difficult change. Audrey's husband, who was very ill in a long term care home, passed away in 2008. CBC Radio interviewed Audrey, now 85 years, for a special Easter Monday edition, called *New Beginnings*. Audrey came to embrace living at Unitarian House and cherish her new friends and wonderful staff. She loved her Friday mornings with the knitting club members. Beautiful works by the knitters raise hundreds of dollars annually at the Fall Fair.

A Memorial Service was held at All Saints 'Anglican Church, Westboro on January 22, 2016 to celebrate a life lived with courage, grace and humility. Her friendships over a lifetime extended to people from all walks of life and nationalities. *Be ever kind to others* was Audrey's motto to live by and her message to all.

Audrey – "Always bright as a button" her sister Jean used to say.

- Kerri Weller



Jean Perrin & Gerry Taylor Wolefert
Quilt by Audrey Weller & Susan Ambrose

**Save the dates!
Upcoming Events in 2016:**

Unitarian House Fall Fair 2016

Date: September 10th 2016
Place: Unitarian House Courtyard
Time: 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Huge outdoor sale, entertainment, BBQ, bake sale and silent auction!

Harvest Moon Family Variety Show

Date: October 16th 2016
Place: The First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa
Time: 3 p.m. – 5 p.m.
Entertainment: Tony Turner in concert
Refreshments will be served
Adults: \$20.00
Children: \$10.00

Call Unitarian House for details
613-722-6690



Shurmin Jacobs

Celebrating 25 years at Unitarian House!

Shurmin moved to Ottawa from St Vincent Island in 1976 to help her sister raise her children. Once the children were old enough to be on their own she started working in the Westboro area as a homemaker and heard about a position in housekeeping at Unitarian House. Shurmin's journey at Unitarian House started in 1991 and over the years Shurmin moved into the Nursing Department. She has two children of her own; Andrew is 15 and

Angelique is 14. Shurmin has worked for the past 14 years on the night shift with Kim Drew (who celebrated her 30th year at UH in 2015) and together they are the pulse of the night shift.

Congratulations on your 25 years Shurmin! We value your dedication and contribution to Unitarian House!

Unitarian House of Ottawa
"We call it home"

Thank you to the following contributors of this issue: Christina O'Neil, Liz Pritchard, Kerri Weller, Jessica Veysey, Kathy Yach, Shirley Gay

About Us is published twice each year with a Spring/Summer issue and a Fall/Winter edition. These two newsletters keep friends of Unitarian House informed of the ongoing activities and needs of our home.

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