

A momentous human rights milestone was reached on January 28, 1916. On that day, Manitoba women became the first in Canada to have their right to vote acknowledged.



Women trustees honoured in RETSD



The 100th anniversary of women's right to vote in Manitoba was marked in 2016, and the role of women trustees was also front and centre, both provincially and in River East Transcona School Division.

In June, the RETSD Board of Trustees held a luncheon to honour the women who have served as trustees in the many districts that have made up River East Transcona over the years.

Board chair Colleen Carswell and trustee Eva Prysizney worked tirelessly to organize the event and contact former women trustees and the relatives of those who have passed. They located 51 trustees and gathered information on many more, such as: Ruth Garven, the first woman trustee in RETSD in 1919; Lillian Finnson, the first woman board chair in 1944; and Mary Andree, the longest-serving woman trustee who was with the division for 40 years.

"It was a great honour researching and celebrating these women who for the last 100 years gave of themselves to serve their community," says Ms. Carswell.

Former trustee Helen Mayba and Murdoch MacKay student Grace Minsky spoke at the luncheon, and the Polson School Grade 4 choir provided entertainment.

The board was thankful that the families of trustees who have passed shared their memories so the women could be honoured along with those who attended.

"All the women trustees before us travelled a road with many challenges, but these were offset by the many successes," says Ms. Prysizney. "We're continuing the legacy started by those before us."



RETSD's women trustees—(front) Lillian Copp; (seated, l-r) Vicki Lazaruk, Jean Chanowski, Linda Hughes, Pat Watson, Lorraine Vallis; (standing, l-r) Patricia Wally, Brianne Goertzen, Lori Chrol, Barbara Buffie, Gail Scheer, Helen Mayba, Kris Friesen, Eva Prysizney, Colleen Carswell, Marilyn Lamoureux.