



## *Tribute to Hommage à Thérèse Caron*

Marie Thérèse Elizabeth Caron was born in Timmins to Henri Vachon and Antoinette Dufresne. She was the youngest of three children, with two older brothers named René and Philippe. At age six, she began attending school and had an ordinary childhood, enjoying boardwalk walks. However, she remembers a difficult time when her mother contracted contagious scarlet fever and was forced to stay home and not leave the yard.

Thérèse's brothers liked to play pranks on her, such as pulling the curlers on her hair to make her scream. Once, they gave her rocks and told her to go to the Dignum pharmacy on the corner of Wilson and Cameron to buy candy. She returned with a bag full of candy, much to their amusement.

Since she can remember, Therese says she enjoyed going to school to learn and for her many friends. Even though Therese was the jester in the classroom, she had much respect for the teachers and admiration for the knowledge they possessed. All three siblings attended Timmins's elementary and secondary schools. Her first job as a student was writing clients' orders at Mr. Martin's grocery store.

Thérèse received her teaching certificate from the Ottawa Normal School in 1957-58. She began her career in Kirkland Lake and recalls feeling nervous while standing before her class of thirty Grade 2 students.

Thérèse's exceptional teaching practices showcased her initiative and ability to ensure her students' progress and success. She was a member of the Order of the Daughters of Isabella, known for their charitable works. She volunteered her time with fundraising activities for various foundations, which helped buy clothes for underprivileged children and prepare food baskets for those in need.

In 1962, Thérèse married Jean-Guy Caron, the love of her life, and they were blessed with two sons.

After retiring in 1995, she joined RTOERO and dedicated her time and energy to serving on local and provincial committees. She received the Membership Recruitment Award and has been recognized for her volunteer work. Thérèse always showed rigour and pride in all the functions and positions held. The well-being and needs of the members of District 5 Cochrane-Temiskaming were close to her heart.

Among the achievements Thérèse made at the district level, we can note the following:

Thérèse organized and delivered retirement planning workshops for members in several regions of the district and beyond.

Thérèse had a significant role in organizing the "Road Runner Rally," a fundraising event for the regional hospital. Her team won first place in the rally. Thérèse established a telephone network to improve communication among members. She initiated a dinner meeting every second Tuesday of the month for retirees.

Thérèse came up with the idea of replacing back-to-school day with a "no-back-to-school" day celebration. She invited retirees to have lunch together and head to the golf field to "play a nine-hole." In addition, she started a 25-year membership souvenir photo album.

Thérèse created and edited the "Contact" district newsletter, and she was grateful for Thérèse Chartier's work with the layout. The journal was written in English and French and mailed to members. This project encouraged the participation of French-speaking members.

Thérèse always showed her pride in being Franco-Ontarian and supported all initiatives of French-speaking members. She took every opportunity to inform members about available RTOERO's French resources and respond to the interests and needs of the Francophone district members.

Wonderful travels, family activities, her granddaughters Natasha and Vanessa's visits, journal editing, hobbies, social commitments and RTOERO activities quickly filled Therese's agenda. "Boredom," she said, "don't know!" Thérèse expressed her desire to cherish and retain all the moments that dotted the path of her twenty-five beautiful years spent in retirement.

I want to express my gratitude to Nicole Dion-Gauthier for agreeing to interview her friend, Thérèse, and for providing a precise summary of the interview. This article would not have been possible without her valuable collaboration.

Madame Caron, the members of RTOERO in District 5 would like to extend their congratulations to you. We admire your passion, innovative ideas, drive, and continued contribution to RTOERO. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

