

All funds raised by May Court go back into Oakville

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and provided seed money to Oakville's first daycare, Carey House, Halton Down Syndrome, Reach Out Centre for Kids (R.O.C.K.) and Oakville Trafalgar Memorial Hospital, to name a few. It also has service placements at R.O.C.K. Oakville, Wellspring Birmingham Gilgan House and Wyndham Manor Seniors Program.

Since 1957, it has operated a Nearly New Shop with all profits going back into the community. The shop, now located at 200 Kerr St., is a mainstay fundraiser for the club.

It continues to run programs that support the community like the scholarship program, which has doled out \$650,000 in scholarships since it was established in the 1950s, the puppet program, which was established in 1980 and the Lunch Box program, which began providing nutritious snacks to two elementary schools in Halton in 1991.

Morris, who is part of the puppeteer group, noted how volunteers continue to meet every Tuesday morning — once a month to practise and the other Tuesday mornings to present the plays to students.

"What Would You Do is an anti-bullying play for Grade(s) 4 and 5 students," she described. "It teaches them ways in which to deal with bullying and it talks about a lot of different ways of bullying, physical, verbal and cyber bullying, which is huge now."

While giving back is a big part of what May Court Club does, Morris added the social aspect is also a draw.

For Ann Bucke, a member since the club's second meeting in 1957, it's been a way to get to know people, contribute to Oakville and have fun.

"People I met at the meeting became my life-long friends," describes Bucke from her home in Bronte.

She was a member of the May Court Club in London five years before moving to Oakville and joining here.

In those days, she describes how tight-knit the group was, with about 14 members that met in each other's homes.

"It was all very personable,"



May Court Club of Oakville current members surround a new logo the volunteer service club has unveiled to celebrate its milestone anniversary. The oak tree and its components symbolize May Court's reach within the local community. | **photos by Riziero Vertolli – Oakville Beaver (Follow on Twitter @halton_photog or facebook.com/HaltonPhotog)**



May Court Club of Oakville club sponsors Anna Rea (Tocca Finita), and Grant DeMarsh (Mercedes-Benz Oakville).

said the 92-year-old, describing how you had to be invited by a member to join the group. "We got to know each other very well and people who started the club all came from other towns. It wasn't old Oakville."

One of the more memorable moments for her were the small acts of kindness the group performed. She remembers being part of a group of women, who helped drive a partially-paralyzed woman to the Gus Ryder Pool in Etobicoke so she could enjoy a swim, and establishing the first daycare centre in Oakville, which was passed on to the Town of Oakville to operate.

As past-president between 1960-62, she also recalls the first

big fundraiser the club hosted to help the Oakville branch of the Canadian Arthritis & Rheumatism Society.

They got everything donated for the cocktail party, held at what was then the Upper Canada Country Club (and now the Glen Abbey Golf Club), including drinks and auction items, Bucke described.

"It was a great success," she said, noting each member prepared a loaf of sandwiches while putting their husbands and sons to work parking the cars in fields that today have homes on them.

While she can't recall how much they raised, Bucke, who also volunteered for 45 years

at the legacy location of the Oakville Trafalgar Memorial Hospital, said it was a significant amount that helped pay for a physiotherapist to visit people with arthritis.

Being a May Court Club member has been an enjoyable experience for her, she added, something that has kept her engaged in the community and afforded her wonderful memories to look back on.

Morris, who has been a member for eight years, says the group and its individuals are truly special.

"They really are an amazing group of energetic, dynamic women from all walks of life," she said, adding how she was drawn to the group because of the incredible work they do in the community and the fun they have while they do it. "They just astound me. Every time I'm in a room where there's a discussion about fundraising, the energy level and the enthusiasm and the knowledge and the camaraderie are enough to give

you goosebumps."

She describes how the women have a knack for connecting with the community, including drawing huge support from companies like Mercedes-Benz Oakville, which became the club's first official sponsor in 2005. Tocca Finita came on board last year as a co-sponsor of the club.

Morris said May Court has opened her eyes to many wonderful agencies in the community doing great work.

She's proud to be part of a group that is 100 per cent volunteer-run and is so dedicated to helping the community thrive by putting 100 per cent of the funds it raises back into the community.

Money from the upcoming party will support the club's scholarship program, awarded annually to students that show financial need and strong volunteerism, as well as other May Court-supported charities.

For more on the May Court Club of Oakville, visit www.maycourt.ca.

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