



Antigonish Diocesan CWL Newsletter

October 18th, 2025

"Here I am Lord, send me!"

Anne McCormick – ANTIGONISH DIOCESAN CWL PRESIDENT



Welcome to our annual diocesan Fall Conference! This year's Fall Conference offers information, meaningful discussion and interactive workshops. It is my hope that this conference refreshes our spirits and sparks new initiatives. I invite each of you to listen with an open heart, share your insights generously, and take every chance to grow in friendship and faith.

My sincere thank you to our co-hosts, Our Lady of Lourdes, St John the Baptist and Holy Name Councils. Your teamwork, thoughtful planning, and warm hospitality will contribute to the success of our day.

Excitement is building across the province in anticipation of the national convention which will be hosted in Halifax on August 9th – 12th, 2026. The convention committee is busy at work planning faith filled liturgies, delicious food, superb entertainment, and east coast hospitality - all with faith, fun and fulfillment in mind!

Convention is a wonderful opportunity to grow in faith, develop/renew friendships, to learn/share ideas, to see the organization of the League at another level, and to be inspired by the collective energy of League members from across the country. I attended my first national convention in Toronto this past August. Faith sessions were uplifting, meetings ran smoothly, presentations inspired, debate was informed and respectful, and breakout sessions were engaging. This enriching and affirming experience revealed the remarkable leadership and gifts of our members and deepened my appreciation for the strength, influence, and faith-filled dedication of the Catholic Women's League. I felt so proud to be part of this strong and faith-filled sisterhood.

With the 2026 convention being hosted right here in our province, wouldn't it be great to see a strong turnout of members! I encourage members to plan to attend. Talk it up in your councils! Motivate members by highlighting the benefits; have past attendees share testimonials; build excitement by making this a shared goal in your council and a faith-filled fun experience! Consider creative ways to make it financially possible.

In keeping with past practice when NS hosted the national convention in 2016, parish councils are again encouraged to assist with fundraising by selling tickets for a quilt and a stained-glass raffle; tickets will be available at Fall Conference.

Elections are coming up for some parish councils and for the diocesan council. Serving on the executive is a meaningful way to share your strengths and gifts. Saying YES takes courage. But God doesn't ask us to do this by ourselves. God gives us the Holy Spirit and others to help us. Please consider stepping forward to serve. Will your response be: *"Here I am Lord, send me!"*

Please be assured that your diocesan council is here to support you. Please reach out to us. May Our Lady of Good Counsel guide us as we use our gifts and talents in service to others through the work and mission of the League.

Anne McCormick

Fr Danny MacLennan – ANTIGONISH DIOCESAN SPIRITUAL ADVISOR



Over this past year, I have felt—perhaps as many of you have—that the world seems to be splitting down the middle. Lines are drawn everywhere: conservative and liberal, right and left, one nation against another, even differences among the faithful within our own Church.

Even within parishes, we see division: some kneel in reverence, others stand in devotion, yet both are acts of love for the Lord. And still, our human weakness turns these differences into reasons for separation. Politics and social debates creep into our families and friendships, leaving hearts wounded and relationships strained.

We are not only witnesses to this division; at times, we are participants in it—through our words, our posts online, or the judgments we form in our hearts. But as Catholic women and men, and as members of the Catholic Women’s League, we are called to something greater.

The Holy Spirit calls us to a different path. To be open to the Spirit does not mean abandoning our beliefs. Rather, it means holding those convictions with humility, always remembering that each person—whether they agree with us or not—is a beloved child of God, made in His image.

Letting go does not mean giving up. It means refusing to let anger take root and allowing Christ to soften our hearts so that peace can begin in the hidden places of our souls. True healing in our homes, our parishes, and even in our nation begins when we choose not to add to the noise of hate but instead to be instruments of God’s love.

The Catholic Women’s League has always been about service—service to God, to Canada, and to one another. Through prayer, humility, and charity, we can choose instead to let Christ rule our hearts.

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God”. May this be the path we walk together as in the Catholic Women’s League.

Father Danny MacLennan

Debbie White – DIOCESAN SECRETARY

God has created another wonderful sunset for us to enjoy and as we move into the fall, I am amazed at the wonderful colors and scenery I get to enjoy daily. I am reminded that wonderful pictures are created with small brushes.

It is the same in our CWL councils. Each of us can use our individual talents big or small to create a wonderful council full of lots of amazing and wonderful ideas which we can share with parishioners, neighbors, those who may be alone and those in our communities who are struggling. Like I said before, who doesn’t like a phone call, or visit? Buy a few gift cards at your local coffee shop, and hand them out to the less fortunate; a warm drink goes a long way as the weather starts to change.

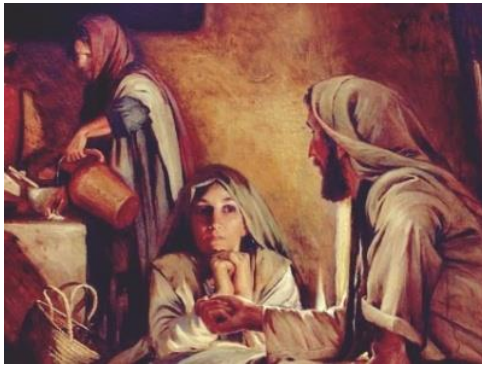
Many councils will be changing with upcoming elections, and I would like to remind everyone that I will need to update my records, so your council doesn’t miss out on any communication. You can always email me.

Always, and especially at Thanksgiving, I am very thankful to belong to this great organization of CWL Sisters.

Debbie White



Doreen Boudreau – FAITH



Martha and Mary

Now as they went on their way, Jesus entered a village. And a woman named Martha welcomed him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to his teaching. But Martha was distracted with much serving. And she went up to him and said, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her then to help me." But the Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things, but one thing is necessary. Mary has chosen the good portion, which will not be taken away from her." (Luke 10:38-42)

Are you a Martha or a Mary?

As women--wives, mothers, grandmothers, volunteers in the community--we are busy. I think that most of us are a Martha *most of the time*. We tend to put the needs of others first. We want to make sure that when we have visitors, the house is presentable, there is food prepared, and we run around serving our guests. We provide for our husbands and children and grandchildren. Laundry, cleaning, food preparation, grocery shopping, running to sports events or dance classes, volunteering in the community, tending to aging parents, and even careers take up much of our days. However, do we stop and set aside some quiet time to spend with Jesus? Jesus said that Mary had chosen the better part. We all need to be a Mary sometimes.

Jesus said: *"Come to me all you who are weary and I will give you rest."* (Matthew 11:28)

It's amazing how spending a bit of time with Jesus will revive us.

Doreen Boudreau

Denise Forgeron – SOCIAL JUSTICE

As your CWL Antigonish Diocesan Social Justice Chair, I want to encourage you to continue to advocate for the return of a blood donor clinic in the CBRM. Our Antigonish Diocesan Resolution, 2025.01 Provision of a Blood Donation Service for the Cape Breton Regional Municipality, inspired by Earlene Landry, and researched by members, was adopted at diocesan and provincial conventions and forwarded to national CWL to go to all provinces to be used where applicable. The resolution urges Canadian Blood Services, in collaboration with community partners, to provide a blood donation service for the Cape Breton Regional Municipality.



Now our action comes into play and your parish help is needed.

Action Plan: Provision of a Blood Donation Service for the Cape Breton Regional Municipality

1. Encourage CWL members to write letters to Canadian Blood Services to support action on the resolution.
2. Raise awareness of the resolution to gather support from parishioners, community members and community partners.
3. Encourage members to **write letters to the premier, provincial minister of health, local MLAs, Cape Breton Regional Municipality mayor and councilors** urging support of the resolution.
4. Monitor Canadian Blood Services' response to the resolution. *(Let us know if you get responses)*

Denise Forgeron

Louise Campbell – TREASURER



As a Treasurer what am I thankful for? We have just celebrated Thanksgiving with our families and friends. It is a time of year when we intentionally take the time to pause and consider what we are grateful for, although as the Bible reminds us we should always be grateful to God for his blessings.

(Psalm 107:1 says: “Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever”; 1Thessalonians 5:18, “Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus”).

So as a Treasurer what am I thankful for?

- I am thankful for the volunteers who show up each time to set the tables, prepare and serve the meals and stay for the cleanup.
- I am thankful for the local businesses who support our efforts by donating goods and services to our ventures.
- I am thankful for the community members who come out to eat our meals, buy our tickets and baked goods.
- I am thankful for all those marvelous bakers and preserve and jam makers who provide the goodies for our bake tables.
- I am thankful for the kind words of support and gratitude from our parish members and Clergy.
- I am thankful for the support and encouragement I receive from my fellow diocesan council members.
- I am thankful to all of you for taking the time to read my words.

Louise Campbell

Julie LeLievre – PAST PRESIDENT



Welcome to the diocesan Fall Conference as we gather together to share our enthusiasm for the League, and enjoy the friendship with members.

Advent is fast approaching. It is a time of Hope – for renewed strength in our beliefs; Peace – in our hearts and in our world; Joy – in our love of God; Love – for all peoples and welcoming Christ into our family home.

“Dear Lord Jesus, we ask that you help us prepare our hearts this Christmas. During this Advent season, may we pray more, look for ways to help others and show kindness in your name. AMEN”

I ask for your prayers as I continue my personal health issues with Cancer and ongoing treatments. I will see you at convention!

May we give thanks to our Lord God for all His glorious blessings, as we continue to answer the call “Here I am Lord, send me!”

Julie LeLievre



Against Human Trafficking



Many influences have impacted this newsletter. In September I attended the Provincial – Diocesan CWL Executive Retreat in Amherst. At Saturday Mass at Holy Family Church, I picked up a leaflet made by their CWL council about the White Ribbon Campaign against Human Trafficking and Child Pornography. What a thoughtful and well-done leaflet! I did get permission and will try to make it available for use in December's campaign. While travelling back from the Amherst CWL Provincial Retreat we stopped at the Alma Truck Stop. This notice was on their poster board. Clicking on the QR code with your cell phone will take you to the NS RCMP site and information on the Human Trafficking Unit. Human Trafficking Hotline (1-833-900-1010).

It was brought to my attention that Highway 104 was a major corridor out of the province for trafficking teens and young adults. Apparently, Nova Scotia has the highest rate of trafficking in Canada. Many of the youth, male and female, runaways are being groomed and eventually moved out of the province to Ontario or out west to Alberta and BC.

Learn more about human trafficking and support the Joy Smith Foundation at <https://joysmithfoundation.com>. Support transition houses, for example, Willow House, CB that specialize in domestic and sexualized violence support.

The White Ribbon Campaign is on December 6th on National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women. In her fall memo, Madonna Clark, National Chairperson of Service, mentions that a seminar on Intimate Partner Violence from UNB professor Dr. Cathy Holtmann is being finalized. She encourages us to host guest speakers on domestic violence and to promote awareness of the White Ribbon Campaign.

Rita Wojtyniak

Antigonish Diocesan Executive Officers 2024-2026

President	Anne McCormick
Spiritual Advisor	Fr Danny MacLennan
Past President	Julie LeLievre
Vice President	Laurena Greencorn
Secretary	Debbie White
Treasurer	Louise Campbell
Faith	Doreen Boudreau
Service	Rita Wojtyniak
Social Justice	Denise Forgeron

Laurena Greencorn – VICE PRESIDENT

As the leaves transfer their colour from green to vibrant yellow, oranges, reds, one may think of changing home decor from summer to fall.

As we enter sweater weather, out come the sweaters, chunky knit throws and faux fur throws.

As we decorate, we bring in dried branches or leaves, pinecones, acorns and chestnuts and decorate our house with fall colours. We also fill our homes with the scents of fresh baked bread, apple and pumpkin pie. These bring out the wonderful smell of cinnamon.

One of my favourite cookie recipes that I would like to share with you is:

Nova Scotia Ginger Molasses Cookies

(They are soft, chewy, and perfectly spiced and makes the kitchen smell wonderful)

2 ¼ cup flour

2 tsp ground ginger

1 tsp cinnamon

½ tsp ground cloves

½ tsp salt

2 tsp baking soda

¾ c unsalted butter (softened)

1 cup white sugar

1 egg

¼ cup molasses



Preheat oven 350. Line baking tray with parchment paper.

Cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy.

Mix in egg and molasses until smooth.

Mix dry ingredients. Stir into wet ingredients until soft dough forms.

Roll into 1-inch balls and roll in sugar. Lightly flatten with fork.

Bake 8-10 minutes until just set.

Cool, leave on tray for 2 minutes before transferring to wire rack.

Note: They don't last long at my house.

Laurena Greencorn

Have You Visited Our Diocesan Website Recently?

Members are encouraged to visit our diocesan CWL website which continues to be a work in progress. The site features information about our diocesan and parish councils, along with memos, newsletters, reports and updates on upcoming events. You'll also find helpful resources and links to our provincial and national websites to support your League journey.

We hope the site will allow us to share information, stay informed, celebrate our successes, and connect with one another.

Take a few moments to explore – Visit us at www.antigonishdiocesancwl.ca

Contact us at cwldioceseofantigonish@gmail.com



CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP FOUNDATION



The Sisters of Service of Canada, looking to their legacy, approached the Catholic Women's League of Canada (CWL) with a gift and a challenge. Inspired by the shared mission of a just, merciful, and compassionate world nurtured by women, the CWL and the Sisters of Service had a vision to transform the leadership landscape through the education and training of Canadian Catholic women to serve as transformational leaders.

Women have always had a significant role in the Catholic Church. Historically, women held roles as educators, philosophers, and doctors in the Church. Others have had a tremendous impact on the world through their service of the sick, poor, and hungry. Biblically, stories of women range from acts of charity, hospitality, to spreading the Good News with the Apostles themselves. Today, Catholic women are at the forefront of the Church – serving in administration, engaging in speaking events, involved in social justice – and spreading their faith in the workplace, their home, and the world. Women's voice and leadership in the church continues to be enhanced as a more collaborative vision for church leadership is gradually realized.

The Catholic Women's Leadership Foundation (CWLF) enables an influential voice for Catholic women in Canada through collaboration, education, and supportive networks. Our goal is to become the leading authority in Canadian Catholic women's leadership through the development of diverse programs and activities. We are excited about empowering Catholic women with increased leadership skills and confidence to create change and impact based on Catholic values. We are committed to supporting, influencing, and inspiring Catholic women's voices in their communities for a better Canada. <https://www.cwlfcanada.ca/>

Our Mission is "To fund leadership education that inspires Catholic women to be transformational and influential leaders where they live and work." Submitted by Cathy Farrow, CWLF Board Member & NS Provincial Faith Chair

"Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path." Psalm 119:105

Everyone has experienced events in their life that changed them. Mine came in an email January 28, 2020 from the Catholic Women's Leadership Program (CWLP) congratulating me on my acceptance into this national program. I felt proud of this accomplishment.

I'm not going to sugar coat it; there are assignments to hand in but more importantly spiritual discernment. Spiritually, it can be an awakening that you didn't know you were missing! Be willing to open up because the team from St Paul University and your classmates will be your support system. The team meets you where you are and will walk with you to where you are trying to go.

The beauty of the CWLP is the confidence it has given me to be a leader in my parish and my community. I would never have become a public speaker, never sat on an executive or never looked outside the box. The CWLP has taught me to look at issues, people and faith through different lenses. As Dewitt Jones proclaims – "Celebrate What's Right With the World!" YouTube: https://youtu.be/gD_1Eh6rqf8?si=HiibJugrV64BCZ-u

I could go on forever because I truly believe that the CWLP is worth a year of your time. As someone recently said, "She has come leaps and bounds since I've known her!" Don't miss out on this golden opportunity. "What you are is God's gift to you, what you become is your gift to God." Hans Urs von Balthasar

Submitted by Maureen Campbell,
Graduate of CWLP, St Paul's University
& St Theresa's Parish Council, Vice President
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LIFE MEMBERS' CORNER



Have you heard the acronym WUCWO and wondered what it means? WUCWO stands for the World Union of Catholic Women's Organizations, "united in mission, transforming lives", which was formed in 1910. Today, it boasts being active on five continents, in more than fifty countries, with over 100 organizations and more than eight million members! As members of The Catholic Women's League of Canada, one of the over 100 organizations, we are all members. The CWL of Canada joined WUCWO in 1921.

WUCWO describes their mission in this way, "We promote the integral development and formation of women, and their participation in all areas of ecclesial and social life, encouraging them to fully live out their Christian vocation and commitment to the world." They have always defended life and family.

They describe their vision in these words, "We aspire for Catholic women to be active protagonists in the Church and in society, collaborating in the construction of a more just and humane world, through the witness of their faith and their concrete commitment."

The General Assembly is the highest governing body of WUCWO. In June 2023, Monica Santamarina was elected President General.

The North American Region includes Canada and the United States. Three organizations/groups are from Canada: The CWL of Canada, the Ukrainian CWL of Canada and the Sisters of Providence. Two are from the United States: Knights of Peter Claver Ladies Auxiliary and the National Council of Catholic Women (NCCW).

The Board Member from Canada at the present time is Honourary Life Member Barbara Dowding. As a Board Member she serves a four-year term.

In 2021, WUCWO created the World Women's Observatory (WWO) to give visibility to the most vulnerable women and contribute to foster their integral development.

The North American Regional Assembly was held in Toronto in August this year, one day prior to the CWL National Convention/Annual Meeting of Members. North American Vice President Barbara Dowding chaired the Assembly. Special guest was the President General Monica Santamarina who addressed the gathering. A presentation was given by Leah Watkins who spoke of the plight of migrant workers in Canada. Three suggestions she gave for us to help are: host the Migrant Worker Exercise (a 1½ - 2 hr. workshop); advocate for open work permits and permanent resident status on arrival, and support local migrant rights groups.

A feather in the hat of The CWL of Canada is the WUCWO Endowment Fund. This was established in 2000 by the efforts of Honourary Life Member Claire Heron. The fund's purpose was to have funds generated by interest to help members of WUCWO, who did not have the financial means, to attend Board meetings and assemblies. Some of our councils in the Diocese of Antigonish contributed to the Endowment Fund. It was incorporated as a registered charity in 2008.

Check out the WUCWO (<https://wucwo.org>) and the World Women's Observatory (<https://www.worldwomensobservatory.org>) websites to learn more about them and the incredible work they are doing.

Cecile Miller, Life Member

Give
thanks





COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS



St. Louis, Louisdale



A Truth and Reconciliation Prayer Service was held on Sunday, September 28, 2025 in Our Lady of the Rosary Park and Resting Place. Members of St. Joseph's CWL in Petit de Grat and Our Lady of Assumption Parish in Arichat joined us. We had a light lunch following the service.



Submitted by Joan Bona, Life Member

*"Reconciliation is about establishing a relationship of mutual respect.
We respect each other...that's what this country should be about".
Honourable Murray Sinclair (1951-2024)*



Our Lady of Lourdes, Stellarton

Earlier this year we invited Sgt Kelly, second from the left, to come to our monthly meeting to share with us information on human trafficking in our local area. Her presentation was so much appreciated we invited her back to speak to a larger audience. Over 200 people attended the session. We were rewarded with many young people as well as parents, teachers and health professionals who received good information to help identify possible victims of this crime. Sgt. Kelly also encouraged attendees to contact police regarding suspected cases of human trafficking.



A Lenten retreat with Sister Jovita MacPherson as our guest speaker was attended by CWL members and invited guests.

Sr. Jovita encouraged us to offer gospel values of kindness and care to all we encounter. She reminded us that we are all children of God and to see all people as humans first, rather than their addictions. Sister Jovita holds a special place in her heart for the unhoused and those with addictions.

Submitted by Paula Cassidy



COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS



St. Marguerite Bourgeoys, Sydney

We have been busy organizing our fundraisers for the Fall!

September:

- ✚ We started our Bakeless Bake Sale which has been very popular and profitable for the past few years. Parishioners are very generous and would much prefer to make a donation than to make a loaf!
- ✚ A lawyer, Dianna Burns, presented a very comprehensive talk on Estate Planning in September. She covered topics of wills, personal directives and making an enduring power of attorney along with providing excellent booklets on the processes involved. The turnout was excellent with both CWL members and parishioners attending.
- ✚ A service was held to honor the Seven Sorrows of Mary. Organ music provided by Steven MacNeil helped to enhance the atmosphere of peace and tranquility.
- ✚ CWL members offered community support to MacGillivray Guest Home by preparing sweets and serving lunch to the grateful residents.

Upcoming:

- ✚ **In October** a Thanksgiving Candle Service is scheduled.
- ✚ **In November** CWL members will support our parish by providing a light lunch following the All Souls Day Mass; a parish shower will be held to gather donations of clothing for men, women and children along with self-care personal items and laundry detergent for the various organizations in our community.
- ✚ **In December** Memory tree cards will be prepared and sold and placed on our always beautiful Christmas tree; our closing banquet will be held and then we will enjoy the holiday season!



Submitted by
Elaine Evelyn



COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS



Our Lady of Assumption, Arichat



CWL Member Cathy LeBlanc, standing, admires baptismal stoles crocheted by Diana Samson. Diana, a CWL member, has been making the stoles for 8 years! She makes 4 per month and has accommodated older children with stoles suitable for their size. The children & their families appreciate receiving them as part of their souvenir package.



On May 8, 2025 Our Lady of Assumption, Arichat, held their monthly meeting at St Anne Nursing Care Centre so that member, Peggy Ouelette could be in attendance. Peggy is a 46-year member. Members from left to right: Cathy LeBlanc, Annette Benoit, Brenda Boudreau, Linda Samson, Claire Boyd, Doreen Boudreau, Diana Samson and in the front Peggy Ouelette. Plans are to hold our October meeting at the Nursing Centre as well.

Submitted by Brenda M Boudreau

St Theresa, Sydney



During the Feast Day Mass in April, members Gen Farrell and Marie MacEachen place a rose on the Book of Life in memory of deceased members.



CWL members donated to the school breakfast program at the Feast Day celebration.

L to R: Anne MacNeil, Service Chair, receives a donation from parishioner & CWL guest, Sharon Youden.



St Theresa's CWL welcomed new member Angela Wasudewa at the new member's ceremony in May.

L to R: Fr Evo DiPierro, Spiritual Advisor; Pat Parego President; Angela; Maureen Campbell, Vice President

Submitted by Wanda Bruckschwaiger



COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS



St Ninian, Antigonish



2024-2025 was an eventful year for the St. Ninian Parish Catholic Women's League. In keeping with our threefold mission of faith, service and social justice, our members created and supported many different initiatives. A highlight was the organization of the Diocesan Annual Convention held at St. Ninian Place in April 2025. Our members also organized social events, such as a meal for the Clergy of the Diocese on the occasion of the Mass of Chrism and receptions for our communion and confirmation candidates and their families.

Members also continued their support to grieving families through prayers at funeral homes and funeral receptions. On the social justice front, our members continued to monitor policy developments and through fundraising efforts donated money to groups, such as the St. Martha's Foundation, the Emergency Fuel Fund and the Food Bank. Our council will be making a substantial donation in November towards the cost of the restoration of the ceiling of St. Ninian Cathedral to the benefit of the entire Diocese.

Finally, our members joined with League members in St. Andrews and Heatherton parishes to organize a day of hope and spiritual reflection for women at Our Lady of Grace Monastery. With Mass, Reconciliation, Adoration of the Eucharist and group sessions led by Sister Jovita MacPherson, the day was designed to bring hope and joy to women of faith in this, our Jubilee Year.

Submitted by Helen Kennedy

St. John the Baptist, New Glasgow



Our annual parish "baby bottle" coin collection in honour of Our Lady took place in May. Our generous parishioners again contributed to a successful project, enabling us to purchase \$800 in supplies for mothers and babies which was donated to the Pictou County Foodbank for distribution to those in need.

Left to right:

Gill Atwood, Anne Willis, Shelly Manning (foodbank) and Marion MacKenzie, President

Submitted by Jill Atwood

St Mary, East Bay



Our sister in the League, Kay Mooney, is an avid kayaker of the Bras d'Or Lakes in East Bay. She shares with us the many scenes of God's creation. Thank you, Kay!

In doing our part to help promote a "sense of community", here in East Bay, our CWL decided ceilidhs might be the way. We have had four ceilidhs and we can say people have visited, danced, and had their share of tea. So, we have officially deemed it a success. They are **the second Sunday of each month** at the East Bay Firehall; 2:00-4:00; \$10.00; Tea & crumpets. Come join us!

Submitted by Theresa Morley