

McMaster University Retirees Association

Minutes of the Council meeting held on Wednesday September 10th, 2003, at 1:30 pm in the Student Centre Room 230

Present: Mildred McLaren (chair), Frank Drieman, Marju Drynan, Marilyn Elliot, Erica Giese, Brian Ives, Gerry Keech, Veronica Morrison, Helen Otrosina, Anne Sinclair, Averil Thompson, and Bonnie White

Regrets: Helen Barton and Jessie Dunlop

1. Welcome

Mildred McLaren welcomed everyone back after the summer break.

2. Approval of the minutes

Page 2 item (b) - delete "The Bridge". Line 1 should read as follows: Mildred McLaren had received a copy of a quarterly newsletter

Motion: that, subject to the above amendment, the minutes of the meeting held on June 11, 2003 be approved as previously circulated (Erica Giese/Helen Otrosina Carried)

3. Business arising from the minutes

(a) MURA website - Marju Drynan was very happy to report that Dr. N Solntseff, (a retiree from Computer Science and Systems) has very kindly agreed to build a framework/shell for our website. The work is in progress and Helen Barton and Marju are to meet with Dr. Solntseff again towards the end of September.

(b) Goals/Plans for 2003/4 - Mildred McLaren said that she had met with Peter Sutherland, Dean of the Faculty of Science, to explore ways in which retirees could be of service to the University as volunteers in a variety of capacities. She suggested that Joan Morris might be interested in contacting key people in various areas and acting in a coordinating capacity. Joan has already indicated her wish to become active in MURA and it was thought that her wide knowledge of the University would be most helpful. It was agreed that Mildred would talk with Joan about this possible work.

(c) Follow-up re. MUFA and faculty retirees

Brian Ives said that he and Helen Barton had met with Lorraine Allen (President of MUFA) and had a useful discussion. The quarterly newsletter sent to faculty retirees is exactly the same as the one sent to "active" faculty and is a useful way of keeping in touch with the academic community. There is no charge for this publication and it seems that, at the present time, faculty do not pay a membership fee to belong to MUF A. This might help to explain why retired faculty are not very well represented as fee paying members of MURA. He suggested that we should take a look at our financial situation

and the possibility of funding from other sources than the annual donation of \$15 per year. Denying the "inactive" members of MURA the full complement of the MURA news does not encourage interest in the Association and its activities. Brian thought that there might be a greater degree of cooperation between MUFA and MURA and one possible step in this direction might be for the two editors to get together. He will continue to work on identifying areas of common interest and "middle ground."

(d) Follow-up re. Germaine Warkentin

Averil Thompson reported that she had been in touch with Germaine Warkentin, a retired professor of English from the University of Toronto, who is very active in promoting CURAC (Colleges and Universities Retirement Associations of Canada). The founding conference was held at Dalhousie University on May 26th, 2003. The President is Peter Russell and the Secretary is Ken Rea. The membership fee is 50 cents per person with a minimum of \$50 and maximum of \$300 per Association. CURAC is an "association of associations" capable of advancing the purposes of a variety of retiree groups, some of which may represent only retired faculty, others both faculty and staff. It is expected that, depending on local circumstances, some member associations will tend to focus on advocacy issues such as pension and benefits while others may be more concerned with providing social and cultural services to their members. It was agreed that Averil should invite Peter Russell to a future Council meeting to give us more information about CURAC. (Web site : www.curac.ca)

4. Correspondence

(a) MUSA is having a thirtieth anniversary gala on Friday October 3rd, at Liuna Station, 360 James Street North. Cocktails at 6pm; dinner at 7pm and dancing from 8pm until 1am. Tickets are \$30 each and are available until September 24th from the MUSA Office in Gilmour Hall Room 107. Retirees are welcome.

(b) Mildred McLaren had been asked by Roy Adams whether his candidacy for political office could be advertised in the MURA news and the answer was no.

(c) Bonnie White had received a message from Michelle Leroux enquiring about space in the next MURA news to introduce herself and the function of her office. Veronica Morrison will contact Michelle to arrange this.

5. President's Remarks

Mildred encouraged Council members to attend the reception for new retirees and to wear their name tags on Monday, September 15th, from 4 - 6pm, in the Council Chambers Gilmour Hall Room 111. She plans to make a brief speech and welcomed any suggestions from Council members regarding the content.

6. Treasurer's Report - this will be available at the next meeting

7. Portfolios

- (a) Membership - Bonnie White reported that the listings were up to date.
- (b) Trips/Special Events - Anne reported that arrangements are going ahead as planned for trips on September 16th, October 15th and November 25th. She sounded us out about the possibility of an inter-generational trip (e.g. grandparents/parents and children) and also a wine tasting and lunch outing to the Niagara area. The latter suggestion was received with great enthusiasm.
- (c) Cards - Helen Otrosina said that she had sent thirteen sympathy cards since the last meeting and read the names of those who had died.
- (d) Christmas Lunch - Helen will investigate the possibility of going to a different location (possibly Student Centre or another restaurant); Anne will provide \$100 for prizes from her Trips/Special Events account; Father Christmas will not put in an appearance this year; Mildred McLaren will invite the special guests (Dr. Bourns and his wife Marion, Peter George and his wife Allison, Mel Hawkrigg and his wife Marilyn, the President of MUSA, the President of the Faculty Association, Lorraine Allen, Michelle Leroux and the recipients of the gerontology scholarships).
- (e) MURA news - Veronica Morrison said that she was hoping to deliver the newsletter to Printing on Monday September 15th, provided copy was given to her promptly.
- (f) Pension Matters - Frank Drieman said that he did not have to vote against the proposed funding formula (which appeared to favour the University) because a decision was made to discuss the matter further. The motion made at the AGM of MURA on May 28th, 2003 (to make available to all members an annual report on the status of the Pension Plan for Salaried Staff) was accepted by the Pension Trust Committee.
- (g) Benefits - Marilyn said that, according to Michelle Leroux, the long-awaited Benefits Booklet for Retirees is expected to be ready soon.

8. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Council will be held on Wed. Oct. 8th, 2003, at 1:30 pm in the Student Centre Room 230. (Room 230 is booked until June 2004. Key is at Room 222.)

9. Adjournment

The meeting ended at approximately 3:10 pm.

Averil Thompson - Secretary

Mildred McLaren - President

