

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE RETIREES ASSOCIATION

On May 25th we had a very enthusiastic turnout of members of the association for our annual general meeting. We met in Convocation Hall where we socialized over a light luncheon and enjoyed the camaraderie of meeting up with old friends and their spouses, some of whom we had not met before. We exchanged congratulations on the state of our good health or commiserations on the lack of it. Most of us seem to be in surprisingly good shape. Maybe the very act of retiring automatically takes away ten years worth of wrinkles and puts a spring in our step.

Eric Vengroff, who was the keynote speaker from *CARP* (Canadian Retired Persons Association) gave unstintingly of his time in answering the many questions posed by members following his presentation. The many brochures and leaflets he brought with him quickly disappeared. He talked about the many ways *CARP* is being of assistance to retirees across Canada and brought forward several options for future exploration with *MURA* Council. Watch for the September or subsequent issues of your *MURAnews* for updates.

The Nominating Committee Report was approved as presented. You will see the complete list of Council members given on the next page of this newsletter. A number of Standing Committees have been formed, the membership of which will be finalized by September when we will be able to share this information with you.

Turn the pages for further reports from the AGM...



Left: Eric Vengroff from *CARP* making his presentation at the AGM



Right: Incoming President Brian Ives surrounded by the 2005-06 Council Members at the AGM

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

with Brian Ives



As I assume the duties of President of this largest organization on campus, I am mindful of the important role that our Association, now just 20 years old, plays on the McMaster scene. I trust I can do my part to ensure it continues to earn the respect of each of our membership, the university administration, and the wider community of university retirees in Canada. I congratulate my predecessor, Mildred McLaren, for her effective leadership and thank her for making the transition so smooth. She will continue her service to *MURA*, contributing feminine wisdom to a successor who does not always think so deeply about how his actions are being received. I am also appreciative of the members who have volunteered for the *MURA* Council, and particularly of Helen Barton (more feminine w.) for accepting the post of Vice President.

In the coming year we would like to see *MURA* become a more "pro-active" organization, seeking out facts and positions relevant to every group of McMaster retirees, and we are restructuring the Council to better achieve this. If you are wondering about some aspect of your retirement status, we should be able to provide the information you seek, and we must continue to monitor what is coming before it appears on the horizon. Our relationship with the university administration is excellent, and we are indeed fortunate to enjoy effective two-way communication, which we intend to nurture. Now that we are respected members of the Canadian 'umbrella' organization, *CURAC* (see Helen Barton's report on page 5 of this issue) we are able to share valuable information and ideas with other retiree groups across the continent.

Although all the 1500+ *MURA* members are former McMaster employees, we are a diverse group of people, (e.g. staff, management, faculty, salaried and hourly employees, and spousal survivors). We would like to serve everyone effectively, and are striving to keep in touch with, and understand the interests and needs of, all the constituent groups. I understand that feedback, such as Letters to the *MURA News* Editor, has been minimal in recent times. To assist you further we have recently provided a "feedback" page on the *MURA* website. I do urge you to communicate your interests and concerns to us, so that we can serve appropriately. In particular be sure to let me know personally when something is not right. My e-mail is quite simple: ives@mcmaster.ca.

MURA COUNCIL–2005-2006

Honorary President: Arthur Bourns

Executive

President: Brian Ives
 Past President: Mildred McLaren
 Vice President: Helen Barton
 Secretary: Averil Thompson
 Treasurer: Beth Csordas

Councillors

Serving until 2006: Gabriele Erasm
 Bonnie White
 Geoffrey Evans

Serving until 2007: Mariana Brown
 Rod Phillips
 Joan Parker

Serving until 2008: Margaret Jenkins
 Roman March
 Joan Morris

Consultants (non-voting)

Salaried Pension Trust
 Committee Representative: Les Robb
 Editor, *MURAnews*: Veronica Morrison
 Organizer, Trips & Tours: Anne Sinclair
 McMaster Retirement
 Support Services: Jeff Chuchman

Liaison & Delegates

University Board of
 Governors: Mildred McLaren
 College & University Retirees
 Association of Canada
 (CURAC): Brian Ives
 MUFA Liaison: Gabriele Erasm
 MUSA Liaison: Helen Barton
 Hourly Staff Liaison: Rod Phillips
 MURA Office: Bonnie White

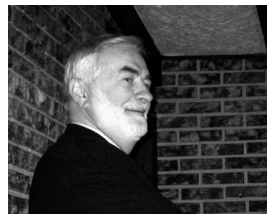


Left: Dr. Roman March expounding with fellow retiree at the AGM



Right: Retirees enjoying some light refreshment at the AGM. *Don't you wish you had been there?*

PRESIDENT PETER GEORGE'S APPRECIATION OF MURA COUNCIL



On Monday April 25th, members of your Council had the pleasure of attending a luncheon hosted by President Dr. Peter George at his residence. In expressing his appreciation to the retiree community and the Council for their enthusiastic support of McMaster's fundraising activities, whereby \$30,000 was pledged in the Community Campaign, he brought us up-to-date on the progress and exciting developments going on around campus, especially the fund raising activities; the Ontario Student Opportunities Fund which provides matching government funds; the transformation of the athletics and recreation facilities, including the new stadium; the progress in acquiring the old CAMCO site for the development of a vibrant research and innovation park; and the proposed plans for the development of a Burlington campus which suggests the creation of three academic 'villages' offering interdisciplinary degrees in Arts & Technology, Corporate and Social Leadership, and Sustainable Environments.

RETIREMENT SUPPORT SERVICES ...

is pleased to announce the arrival of a new Administrator, ***Cindy DiDiodato***. Cindy will assume ***Jeff Chuchman's*** position as RSS Administrator during ***Michele Leroux's*** maternity leave. Cindy brings a wealth of business administration and human resources knowledge to the team, and she has excellent customer service and communication skills. For assistance call either:

Jeff Chuchman, Manager, Ext. 27253
 Beata Dychta, Administrator, Ext. 23692
 Cindy DiDiodato, Administrator, Ext. 24570



SALARIED PENSION PLAN REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT

Submitted at the AGM

This has been a fairly quiet year. The main issue for retirees had to be the lack of indexing for the salaried pension plan. I prepared an article for the MURA newsletter which appeared in the January 2005 issue. Returns have been reasonable this year and I am hopeful there will be better news next January but as the article explained, it all depends on the fund returns.

In that regard, I am a member of a sub-committee of the Pension Trust Committee looking at investment options. Here the interests of the University and those of pensioners are closely aligned. We both are interested in better returns on the plan. The University because it will ease the payments the University must make into the Plan, and pensioners because it means there is a better chance our pensions will be indexed.

This sub-committee has brought forward a number of recommendations aimed at improving the returns. one of these, a change in bond investment strategy towards a longer bond portfolio which better matches our debt duration, has already been put into effect. A second area being explored is the use of so called alternative investments – hedge funds and real estate funds. No final decisions have been made on these but I can assure you that they are being approached with much caution.

A recent decision by the Pension Trust Committee is to provide more timely information to members of the Plan about rates of return. As you may know the audited financial statements for years ending June 30 are approved in the fall of each year and only after that has information about rates of return been made available. Only these audited rates have formal status within the plan. However, unofficial rates of return are available more frequently and the Pension Trust Committee has agreed to make these available on a more timely basis. In particular, the semi-annual returns approved at the September and March meetings of the Pension Trust Committee will be made available on the HR web pages in the future. Normally, these should appear shortly after the March and September meetings but as details are still being worked out, the semi-annual returns for the period ending Dec 31, 2004 (approved at the March meeting) have not been posted yet. They will be posted shortly on the HR website: look in the area where you currently find annual returns - start at <http://www.workingatmcmaster.ca>, select 'HR Services A to Z' from the menu bar on the left hand side of the page, select 'R', then select "Retirement Support Services", then look for and select "Pension Fund Rate of Return" from the items on the right side of the page.

Les Robb
MURA Representative on the Pension Trust Committee

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Submitted at the AGM, May 25, 2005

Comparison	2005	2004	Group	Active	Inactive	Assoc.	Total	%
Regular Active	719	696	AF	13	18	3	34	2.2
Inactive	696	651	Clinical Fac.	53	39	2	94	6.0
Associate*	140	123	Faculty	236	220	43	499	32.1
			Hourly	54	167	29	250	16.1
Total	1555	1470	RA		4	1	5	.3
Increase		+85	Staff	289	212	48	549	35.3
Regular Active:		55.2%	TMG	74	36	13	123	8.0
Regular Inactive:		44.8%						
				719	696	139	1554	100.00

*Includes one member from another university.

Bonnie White
Membership

**A TRIBUTE TO
EMERITUS PROFESSOR
DR. GERALD L. (Gerry) KEECH**

FRIDAY JUNE 3, 2005...

marked the passing of a much loved friend. Gerry served on *MURA* Council from 1997, maintaining the membership database and culminating with the role of President from 1999 to 2001. In spite of his failing health, Gerry would never give up. He continued his involvement with Council activities until it became impossible for him to attend the monthly Council meetings.

Gerry was a truly remarkable, gentle man with a fantastic sense of humour. He built on the positives and dark clouds never daunted him, although he had more than his share of tribulations. It was inspiring to be around him and see the way he would bounce back with a grin on his face and a wisecrack in that throaty voice of his when he hit another roadblock.

There are probably a number of you out there who have been the recipients, like me, of Gerry's emotional support and encouragement through rough times in life.

Gerry's academic accomplishments speak for themselves. He was first appointed to McMaster's Department of Nuclear Physics in 1960, later becoming Chair of Computer Science Systems and Founding Director of Computer Services. We bartered over how much secretarial support he needed as I was then supervisor of secretarial staff in the Faculty of Engineering. One secretary five half days a week, Gerry, or three full days. Take your pick!! Needless to say, I soon succumbed to Gerry's wheedling, and even I didn't need a crystal ball to see that computing services would sweep us all along in its explosion into the future. But what an explosion on campus when we see how far McMaster has advanced with this now essential service.

...and to think it all started with Gerry!!!

With his many-faceted persona that included a richly rewarding family life, impressive academic accomplishments, and his love of curling, I'm sure he enjoyed life to the fullest. As Gerry once quoted from George Bernard Shaw to *MURA* members:

***"People don't stop playing because they grow old.
People grow old because they stop playing."***

Veronica Morrison
Editor, *MURAnews*

PASSINGS

Dr. Roy Hornosty–April 7, Sociology
Mr. Wm. H. Fleming–April 15, UTS
Mrs. Marjorie Baskin–April 26, HSC
Dorothy Davidson–May 25–Deputy Librarian
Dr. Gerry Keech–June 3, Computer Science



RECENT RETIREES



Mrs. P. Abernathy–Rehab. Science
Mrs. V. Ariga–Modern Languages
Mrs. Lola Brooks–Elec. & Comp. Engin
Mrs. Marie Cameron–MA(T)-MSc(T)
Ms. Pearl Davis–Medicine
Dr. Donald Dawson–Economics
Mrs. Helen Dietsche–UTS - Data Services
Dr. Robert Drysdale–Civil Engineering
Ms. Pat Ellis–School of Nursing
Mr. Robert Forrest–Maintenance
Dr. David P. Gagan–History
Ms. Joan Garson–Comm. on Scientific Development
Dr. Charles Goldsmith–Clinial Epid. & Biostats
Mrs. Sandra Harper–Clinical Epid. & Biostats.
Dr. Inga Dolinina Hitchcock–Modern Languages
Mr. Robert Hodgson–Faculty of Business
Mrs. Mabel Hunsberger–School of Nursing
Dr. Brian Hutchison–Family Medicine
Ms. Jeanette Jackson–Biology
Mrs. Mary Johnston–Clinical Epid. & Biostats.
Dr. David Lamont–Obstetrics & Gynecology
Dr. Dominique Lopicq–French
Mrs. Stephanie Lisak–Political Science
Mr. John Macala–Utility Plant
Ms. Lynn MacIntyre–Science (Studies)
Dr. Rod MacLeod–Psychiatry
Mrs. Carolleen McCallum–Clinical Epid. & Biostats.
Dr. A. Mendelson–Religious Studies
Mrs. Mary Mitchell–Registrar - Admissions
Dr. Linda Moffat–Human Resources & Mgmt
Mrs. Marlene Monster–Bookstore
Dr. Evert Nieboer–Biochemistry
Mrs. Lynne Paton–Athletics & Recreation
Mr. D. Pearson–Service Operations
Dr. James Rice–School of Social Work
Ms. Elizabeth Rideout–School of Nursing
Mr. Brian Sayer–Chemistry
Dr. Shepard Siegel–Psychology
Mrs. Joan Smith–Science & Engin. Library
Dr. Meir Steiner–Psychiatry
Mr. George Timmins–Chemistry
Mrs. Mary Anne Trainor–Health Sciences Library
Dr. Edemarian Tsega–Medicine
Dr. Adrian Upton–Medicine
Dr. David Weaver–Mechanical Engineering
Dr. Nick Werstiuk–Chemistry
Dr. Sandra Witelson–Psychiatry

RETIREES AND McMASTER—A WIN/WIN CONNECTION

Helen Barton, MURA's Vice-President, recently attended the 2005 conference and Annual General Meeting of the College and University Retiree Associations of Canada (CURAC). Helen is also a member of the governing Board of CURAC. The following is her report on the highlights of the conference.

Full conference proceedings are available on the CURAC website www.curac.ca

Universities and retirees will both benefit from universities providing more opportunities for retirees to continue their connection to their university. Presentations at the 2005 CURAC conference emphasized and demonstrated this “win/win” relationship.



Why should universities do this for their retirees?

- Most universities are aware of the need and benefit of having their older workforce and retirees continue to be active at their university. Retirees offer an invaluable, often untapped resource because:
 - With a shrinking workforce, having staff and faculty continue to work past normal retirement age is a valuable resource
 - Continued involvement of retirees provides continuity and fills the vacuum caused by high retirement numbers
 - Retirees' accumulated knowledge, wisdom and “institutional memory” is a valuable asset
 - Providing an attractive retirement environment helps attract and retain top quality employees;
 - Retirees are valuable in mentoring new staff and faculty;
 - Eliminating the sense of lack of recognition and “disconnect” that many retirees feel – “strengthening the connection” – will benefit the university in “goodwill”. This will have payback in increased time commitment, and in monetary donations and bequests.

What can retirees do for their universities?

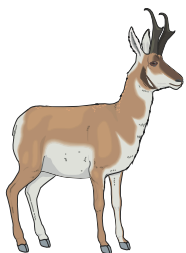
- Continue to be involved in a paid capacity by:
 - Continuing to teach and do research
 - Being engaged as consultants on special projects
 - Temporarily filling staff positions as needed
- Do volunteer service:
 - Be an ambassador for the university in recruitment or fundraising
 - Train and mentor younger staff and faculty
 - Mentor students
 - Assist in designing curricula, strategic planning, or preparations for accreditation reviews
 - Help the university maintain connection with alumni by giving lectures, leading cruises or tours.
 - Serve on university governing bodies such as the Board of Governors and Senate, pension and benefit committees, other advocacy, oversight, selection and ad hoc committees at all levels, and even on employee union bodies

What can a university do to maintain the retiree connection?

- Eliminate mandatory retirement, and provide flexible, early, and staged retirement programs
- Support research grant applications and provide retired researchers with space and infrastructure support
- Support an “Emeriti College”. For example, the University of Southern California (USC) offers several small research grants which retirees use for activities like completing books or traveling to complete research or give presentations
- Develop and support a community lecture program - a published directory of retiree speakers on both academic and non-academic topics of interest to the community
- Enlist retirees to research and analyze topical situations facing the university (e.g. tenure, distance education)
- The University of California (UC), which has 10 campuses, provided an excellent presentation on the structure and activities of their Retiree Centre:
 - The UC Centre has a \$250,000 annual budget, funded by the university, with paid staff plus student and retiree volunteers to run the centre
 - Their goal is to provide an “enduring connection” with the University and to serve the interests of both retirees and university
 - The Centre researches and then develops programs, services and activities for retirees, taking care not to duplicate community services
 - Both USC and UC provide administrative support to their retiree associations

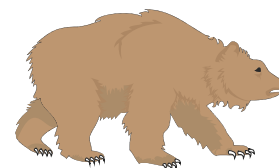
- Some of the retirement benefits and services that UC and USC provide are ones that McMaster retirees also have. Examples are free parking and library privileges, email accounts and pre-retirement planning sessions
- Other benefits and services that are provided by one or both of these institutions include:
 - Free tuition for retirees and their eligible dependents
 - A health care facilitator
 - Employee rates at recreation facilities
 - Discounted membership at “University Clubs”
 - Computer training classes designed for seniors
 - Extensive pre-retirement courses
 - Emergency financial assistance
 - Recreation sessions exclusively for retirees
 - Retirees are included in all contracts negotiated by the University
 - A retiree “return to work” program for those who may need to augment their pension income
 - A “learning in retirement” program – courses for retirees, taught on a volunteer basis
- On-campus retirement housing is thought by many to be the ultimate in “keeping the connection”
 - For example, there is a major “university village” development underway on the University of British Columbia campus. This will not be restricted to retirees, but 50% must be university-related people. UBC considers this important for the recruitment and retention of faculty. There will be a variety of units available on a rental, lease or purchase basis. “Assisted living” services will be available.

Helen Barton



TRAVEL UPDATE FROM ANNE SINCLAIR

The Alaska Cruise was a resounding success. Denali National Park was absolutely breathtaking. We even managed some sunbathing and took lots of pictures. We hope to put some of these in the September newsletter.



There are still some spaces available on the **Grand River Boat Cruise** scheduled for September 13th. You will find details on the “Money Matters” page, so give me a call as soon as possible if you are interested.

A **European Riverboat Cruise** is “in the works” for next summer. Let me know if this appeals to you. Look for more details in subsequent newsletters.

Anne Sinclair
Trips and Travel Planner

Did you know that over 500 alumni, staff, retirees and friends have included McMaster in their estate plans? If you would like to do the same, or simply talk to someone about giving options, please call the Office of Gift Planning at 905-525-9140, ext. 23447.